

4 Hemshin from Islamicization to the end of the nineteenth century

Hovann H. Simonian

Beginning of conversion

Little is known of the exact circumstances that led to the transformation of what was still an almost exclusively Christian district in the early seventeenth century into a mostly Muslim one a few centuries later. Accounts from historians and travellers to the region differ on the date at which Islam began to gain a foothold among Hamshenite Armenians. Protestant missionaries H. G. O. Dwight and Eli Smith, who wrote during the 1830s, were told by an Armenian Catholic of Trebizond that conversion had taken place some 200 years ago (i.e. during the 1630s).¹ Father Ghukas Inchichian of the Venice branch of the Armenian Catholic Mekhitarist congregation – as well as Father Manuēl K‘ajuni, who probably used Inchichian as source – provides the later date of the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth.² P. T‘umayian similarly indicates 1690 to 1700 as the period of the Islamicization of ‘the large Hamshēn canton’.³ According to Father Hakovbos V. Tashian (Jacobus V. Dashian) of the Vienna Mekhitarists, ‘Hamshen was still an Armenian Christian country until 1700’,⁴ since Islamicization had begun by the end of the seventeenth century but made significant progress only in the eighteenth century.⁵ Another Venice Mekhitarist, the prominent scholar Ghewond V. Alishanian, dated the conversion period to the mid-eighteenth century.⁶

Ottoman registers (*defters*) show that Hemshin was still overwhelmingly – if not exclusively – Christian until the late 1620s. The district paid a large amount of poll tax (*cizye*), the tribute owed by Christians under Muslim rule, in the form of honey, beeswax (with which candles were made) and clarified butter sent to the Imperial Palace in Istanbul. In 1609–10, some 5,541 *vukıyyes* (7,090 kg) of honey and 2,000 *vukıyyes* (2,560 kg) of beeswax were thus paid. According to a register, the quantity of beeswax had been increased to 3,000 *vukıyyes* (3,840 kg) by 1626–27.⁷

Changes may have started to affect the area in the years immediately following this increase. Information gleaned from an Armenian manuscript copied in 1630 (Venice, Mekhitarist Monastery, ms. 52) points to possible changes taking place around that period. The monk who illuminated the manuscript remembered in a colophon his tutor, Tēr Awetis from Pontos, ‘a bishop alike an apostle’.⁸ Tēr Awetis not only hailed from the Pontos, but he was probably the same person

as the Metropolitan Awetik⁴, who was the Armenian bishop of Trebizond until his death in 1648.⁹ The first ever mention of a bishop of Trebizond in a manuscript copied in Hamshen and the concomitant absence of reference to a local bishop may be interpreted as a sign of the decline or disappearance altogether of the Hamshen diocese, and of the annexation of its remnant to the Trebizond diocese. A second element corroborating the hypothesis of a decline during that period is the severe diminishing and perhaps even interruption of scribal production that appears to have taken place after 1630, since no manuscripts copied in Hamshen for the rest of the seventeenth and the entire eighteenth century have reached us. The commencement of the process which would result in the conversion to Islam of part of the Hamshen Armenians and the exodus of those remaining Christian appears to have been the cause of the demise of the Hamshen diocese and of the decline or interruption of scribal production in its monasteries.

As plausible as this hypothesis may be, the possibility should also be explored that the Islamicization of Hemshin was not the impetus of the disappearance of the Hamshen diocese, but was rather a consequence of its decline. Speros Vryonis has pointed to the decline of the Byzantine Church as one of the main causes of the passage to Islam of the Greek population of Anatolia.¹⁰ A similar process could have taken place in seventeenth-century Hemshin. Impoverishment or disappearance of the Hamshen diocese following one event or another, such as confiscation of its lands, could in turn have facilitated the transition to Islam of a large section of its flock. Left defenceless by the absence of spiritual leaders, Hamshen Armenians may have been more likely to succumb to the pressure or temptation of conversion.

In spite of its weakened condition, however, the diocese of Hamshen did possibly linger on until the end of the seventeenth century. Its centre, the monastery of Khach'ik Hawr (also known as Khach'ek'ar or Khach'ik'ear), was noted as the seat of a bishopric on a 1691 map of the Armenian Church that a Bolognese aristocrat, Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsili, commissioned an Armenian scholar of Constantinople, Eremia Çelebi K'ēōmiwrchian (Kömürçüyan), to prepare. Unfortunately, the inscriptions on the map do not indicate whether the diocese still existed in 1691, or was a thing of the past.¹¹ The monastery itself survived much longer, possibly until 1915.¹²

Surprisingly, the Matenadaran of Erevan holds a manuscript copied in Hamshen in 1812 (Matenadaran, ms. 7291). The presence of this manuscript is difficult to explain, since it was produced almost two centuries after the last manuscript preceding it, namely the 1630 manuscript now deposited in Venice. Either the manuscripts, although in reduced numbers, were still produced in the monastery between 1630 and 1812, or the 1812 manuscript was the result of a brief resurgence of scribal production after almost two centuries of interruption. The presence of the monastery as the sole remnant of the diocese of Hamshen would explain why Eghiovit/Elevit, the village near which it was located, remained Christian until the early nineteenth century (see Map 2.1). Even though it was still called a *vank'*, or monastery, by Father Minas Bzhshkian and recorded as such in documents of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1913, by that date it was probably



Figure 4.1 The ruins of a Christian chapel in the Firtina Valley in 1957. Unfortunately, the exact location of these ruins is unknown today.

little more than a modest church with a *k'ahanay*, or *erēts* ' (i.e. a married priest, the lowest rank in the hierarchy of the Armenian Church) as pastor.¹³

The decline of the Armenian Church may have been paralleled by the progression of Islam in the district from as early as the 1640s on. A warrant (*berat*) issued during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Ibrahim (1640–1648) refers to the restoration of a mosque – perhaps the conversion of a church into a mosque – in the village of Çötenes, along the Senoz Dere (now Ormancık, in the Kaptanpaşa district (*bucak*) of the Çayeli county (*ilçe*)).¹⁴ This building was probably one of the first mosques in the *kaza* of Hemshin, and its presence stands as proof that Islam was making its first inroads into the district. Unfortunately, we do not know if the congregation that worshipped in this mosque was composed of converts or of Muslim migrants, such as soldiers, *timar* (military fief) holders, or other state officials.

Islam probably recorded greater advances during the second half of the seventeenth century. Thus the oldest Muslim tombstone in Hemshin is dated 1699 to 1700 (Hijri 1111). The epigraph inscribed on the tombstone gives the name of one Hacı Abdullah-zâde Müsellim Osman Efendi (*efendi* was a title given to literate people).¹⁵ Abdullah-zâde, or son of Abdullah, was a frequent appellation for slaves and converts in Islam, and this individual may have converted to Islam at some point during the second half of the seventeenth century, a few years or decades before his death.

The differences in dates of conversion between sources are a probable indication that Islamicization in Hemshin was an ongoing process, as Tashian pertinently suggested, rather than an abrupt one.¹⁶ Inchichian, describing the situation at the end of the eighteenth century, says that the Khala (Hala) Valley had lost its Armenian inhabitants little by little due to conversion, and that Armenians could no longer be found there, nor in the Upper and Lower Vizha villages (Viçe, now the Upper and Lower Çamlıca quarters (*mahalles*) of the town Çamlıhemşin). In contrast, Tap‘ or Ch‘at‘ (now Çat), Koluna (Kolona, now Zilkale), K‘oshtints‘ (or K‘oshtents‘, also the seat of a monastery, location unknown), Amogda (Amokta, now Şenköy), Metsmun (or Medzmun, the Mezmun quarter of Ülkü), Zhanëntnots‘ (location unknown), Molëvints‘ (Molevis or Mollaveys, now Ülkü), Uskurta (now a quarter of Şenyuva), Shnch‘iva (Cinciva or Çinçiva, now Şenyuva), Gushiva (Kushiva, now Yolkiy), Ordneints‘ (Ortnets, now Ortan or Ortanköy), Makrëvints‘ (Makrevis, now the Konaklar quarter of Çamlıhemşin) and Khapag (the Kavak quarter of Çamlıhemşin) had a mixed Armenian and Muslim population. One last village, Evoghiwt or Eghiovit (Elevit, now Yaylaköy), ‘located at the head of the Hamshēn Vichak [diocese], was entirely Armenian until recently [i.e. the end of the eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century], when half of its population converted to Islam’.¹⁷

An examination of the location of the villages which had lost all of their Christian inhabitants by the end of the eighteenth century provides clues to a possible cause of Islamicization in Hemshin. The Hala Valley and Lower and Upper Viçe abut directly on two Laz-populated regions, the valleys of the Zigam Dere and of the lower stretch of the Firtina (see Map 2.1 and Plate 6.1). The Lazi are believed to have started to convert to Islam in the 1580s, soon after the Ottoman conquest.¹⁸ Once Islamicized, the Laz had a clear advantage over the Armenians of Hemshin, which may have disturbed the traditional balance between the two neighbouring groups. The episode reported by Laz informants to Alexandre Toumarkine in the early 1990s about the expulsion of Armenians from five villages in the lower Firtina Valley could well have taken place during that initial period, when the Lazi were already Muslims and the Hamshen Armenians still Christians. Hamshen Armenians, had they remained Christians, may have found themselves in a position of subordination *vis-à-vis* the Laz similar to that of their compatriots living on the Armenian Plateau with regard to the Kurds – their lives and property at the mercy of the latter.¹⁹

The threat of seeing their land and property taken over by the Laz probably precipitated the conversion of the population of those Hemshin villages adjoining Laz settlements. By converting, Hemshin Armenians of the Hala Valley and of the two Viçe villages would have re-established the previous equilibrium in their relations with their Laz neighbours. Their conversion would also have created a buffer area protecting the other villages of Hemshin, located further up the Firtina River, both from the Laz and, to a lesser degree, from Muslim clerics and other Ottoman officials with a proselytizing zeal. Islamicized Hemshin Armenians would thus have played a role similar to that of the Pashai people of Afghanistan, who stood between the Muslim lowlands and Kafiristan until the conversion of that

region to Islam in 1895.²⁰ This protection, diminishing pressure on the highland villages of the upper Fırtına to convert, would explain how a small percentage of the population of Hemşin could have remained Christian until the early nineteenth century. The configuration of the population in the valleys of the Fırtına and Susa (Zuğa) Dere would have followed a three-tier pattern from the second half of the seventeenth century on, with the Laz on the coast and the lowest stretches of these rivers, Islamicized Hamşen Armenians, i.e. Hemşin or Hemşinli, in the lower and middle stretches of these rivers and the entire Hala Valley, and Christian Armenians along the middle and upper Fırtına. This latter section would have been reduced with time, since most of its population went over to Islam, leaving only Eghiovit/Elevit as an exclusively Christian village by the early nineteenth century. The modern-day 'rivalry' between the Hemşin inhabiting the valley of the main branch of the Fırtına Dere and those of the Hala Dere, noted by Erhan Ersoy, may reflect differences in the periods of conversion of the two groups.²¹

Local circumstances, such as the Islamicization of the Laz, were not alone in bringing about the mass conversion of Hemşin Armenians. Other factors, which had a wider regional or state-level character, were at play. The seventeenth century was a time of trouble for the Ottoman Empire, with the multiplication of signs of decline. The need to find resources to finance costly military campaigns, buy off janissaries' revolts, and pay for the sometimes extravagant spending of the sultans and their court as well as other state expenditures was a constant problem throughout the period. The demands of the budget often translated into increased tax pressure, in the form of poll tax (*cizye*), land tax (*haraç*) and tithe (*ispence*), on religious minorities. İnchichian mentions fiscal oppression as the reason for the conversion of Hamşen Armenians.²² Indeed, an unbearable tax burden is cited throughout history as one of the primary motives of conversion for religious minorities living under Islamic rule.

The case of the district of Tortum, located to the south of Hemşin and separated from it by Pertakrag (Kiskim, now Yusufeli), illustrates the role of taxation as a cause of Islamicization. According to contemporary Yakovb Karnets'i (Jacobus of Karin), one Mullah Jafar, 'mean and enemy of the Christians', received in 1643 the order from Istanbul to organize a census of the population of the districts around Erzurum. The census resulted in excessively heavy taxes, to escape from which the Armenian-speaking 'Georgians' (i.e. members of the Georgian Church or Chalcedonians) of Tortum converted *en masse* to Islam. In his text, Karnets'i rejoiced that unlike the 'Georgians', the Apostolic Armenians of Tortum remained steadfast in their faith.²³ Certain taxes such as the tithe, however, were fixed at the district level and were not reduced when the Christian population of a district diminished.²⁴ Consequently, the conversion of the 'Georgians' meant that the Armenians, who constituted half of Tortum's population, were left alone to carry the burden of taxation for the entire district (i.e. a doubling of their already unbearable charge). If at the time of Karnets'i's writing, in the 1660s, the Armenians of Tortum had not yet converted the increased tax pressure would soon lead many to do so in following decades.²⁵ The arbitrary process by which the *haraç* was increased and the resulting misery of the Armenian population is described in detail in the colophon of a 1694 manuscript copied in Baberd (Bayburt), then a

sancak (subprovince) of the Erzurum province. Grigor, the scribe who authored the colophon, writes that the manuscript was copied 'in these difficult times, when we were, like a ship surprised by storm, in the hands of impious and cruel tyrants. They stole and plundered without distinction'.²⁶

Erzurum officials did not have jurisdiction over Hemshin, and one should be careful to avoid outright projections. Yet, as confirmed by Inchichian, oppressive taxation is highly likely to have played in the conversion of Hemshin a role similar to the one it played in Tortum. Bzhshkian also implicitly supports this idea when discussing the poverty of Hemshin, to escape from which some moved towards Trebizond, Sürmene and Khurshunli, while 'the ones who stayed behind became Muslims'.²⁷ This last sentence is very important, since it shows that conversion was a means to escape poverty, which was at least partly caused by excessive taxation. Hemshin, a mountainous district lacking arable lands, was already not particularly prosperous, and it is not too difficult to imagine the disastrous consequences that an increase in taxation could have provoked there.

An example of a tax increase during the seventeenth century is provided in Ottoman registers. Between 1609–10 and 1626–27, the quantity of beeswax paid by the Christians of the Hemshin district was increased from 2,000 vukiyyes (2,560 kg) to 3,000 vukiyyes (3,840 kg).²⁸ The conversion of part of the population would have compounded tax increases similar to this one, since fewer people would have been left to pay much more, thus precipitating further conversions and an exodus of Christians.

The experience of dealing with oppressive taxation must certainly have been traumatic enough for some migrants from Hemshin to choose to keep secret from outsiders the location of their newly built settlements in the hinterland of Platana (now Akçaabat).²⁹ These settlers had reason to hide, since migration was often not enough to escape from taxation. In the early nineteenth century, descendants of migrants who had left Hemshin decades and even over a century earlier and who had settled in the city of Trebizond were still required, together with their compatriots living in villages around Trebizond, to contribute to an annual shipment of beeswax to the Imperial Court.³⁰

In addition to increased taxation, Ottoman troubles may have been responsible for increased intolerance *vis-à-vis* Christian minorities in the mid-seventeenth century, during the reign of Sultan Mehmed IV (1648–1687). The Surb Step'annos (St Stephen) Armenian church, located within the fortress of Erzurum, was converted into a mosque in 1662, leaving only one church outside the walls of the fortress to cater to the spiritual needs of the 2,000 Armenian households in the city.³¹ According to Anthony Bryer, this rising intolerance translated into a wave of persecution of Pontic Greeks during the 1650s and 1660s. Three martyrs were noted during the 1650s, and the St Philip Greek-Orthodox Cathedral in Trebizond was turned into a mosque in 1665 or 1674.³² The Armenians of Trebizond may have been affected as well, if the martyrdom of two Armenians from that city noted a few years later, in 1678 and 1698, was linked to the same wave of persecution.³³ Ottoman military reverses in the first Russo–Turkish war (1676–1681), which was brought to an end with the Treaty of Radzin, probably contributed to increased scrutiny of local Christians as potentially

suspicious elements, heightening existing hostility towards them. Further setbacks against Russia and other European powers during the last two decades of the seventeenth century, followed by the signature of the treaties of Karlowitz (1699) and Constantinople (1700), which ratified the Ottoman defeats, did little to improve Muslim citizens' attitudes towards the Christian subjects of the Sultan.³⁴

In what measure this religious persecution influenced the conversion of Hemshin Armenians is a justifiable question. Although no specific document is available, we know that an outflow of Armenians from Hemshin was taking place during this period. In 1676, the Surb P'ilipos (St Philip) Church was built in the hamlet of K'ean (K'yan, Kân, now Kayabaşı, in the Yomra county of Trabzon).³⁵ The builders of the chapel were in all likelihood among the first refugees from Hemshin fleeing the Islamicization of their native district. The presence in K'ean of Hamshenite Armenians is a clear indication of a religious shift affecting Hemshin during the second half of the seventeenth century.

In the case of the Pontos, the intolerance of which the Christians, both Greeks and Armenians, were victims was not so much implemented by central authorities as by valley lords (*derebeys*). The crises that affected the Ottoman Empire during the seventeenth century led to the weakening of central government in Anatolia. From the mid seventeenth century on, timariots, or holders of *timars*, and other adventurers became transformed into derebeys, having attained a status of almost complete autonomy from Istanbul and taken local government into their own hands. As explained by Bryer, the rule of the derebeys was difficult for everyone, but especially for Christian villagers, who were often reduced to a position of serfdom. Moreover, the wars which opposed the derebeys to one another or to central authorities – represented by the pashas of Trebizond – caused the instauration of a climate of violence and anarchy, which lasted until the power of the state was reasserted during the 1830s and 1840s.³⁶ Thus the Armenian population of Trebizond was greatly reduced between 1765 and 1772, many choosing to leave a city ravaged by conflict between derebeys, and three churches were abandoned because of persecution.³⁷ To escape from this regime of duress and lawlessness, many Christian subjects (*rayas*) sought refuge in conversion. Sometimes Christians were directly coerced into conversion, as in Sürmene, where according to Father Abel Mkhit'ariants', the houses of Armenians and Greeks were burned down by the derebeys, and the populations were forced to accept Islam during the same period (i.e. the 1760s and 1770s).³⁸

It should be noted that some persecution of Hemshin Christians by local officials was already taking place in the first decades of the seventeenth century, prior to the rise of the derebeys. This persecution was certainly important enough to provoke disruptions in the flow of honey, beeswax and clarified butter sent as tribute to the Imperial Palace. Consequently, to ensure the arrival of these goods, the administrator of the Sultan's kitchens had to procure 'a special rescript protecting the peasant producers from the exactions of local dignitaries'.³⁹ Yet, in times when central authority was collapsing, as in the second half of the seventeenth century, such edicts were no longer sufficient to restrain the religious fanaticism or cupidity of derebeys and other local officials and ensure the safety of the local Christian population.

Indeed, the derebeys may have carried the flag of Muslim intolerance against Hamshen Armenians, their emergence being the primary cause for the Islamicization of the latter. Orally transmitted histories among families of Hamshenite origin about their exile and settlement in other regions of the Pontos constitute a supplement to the paucity of written sources. These oral accounts corroborate the hypothesis that persecution by derebeys was the main factor in conversion. According to Armenian writer Malkhas, who cites such oral traditions, Hamshen Armenians were subjected to severe persecution, since derebeys could not tolerate the presence of Christians in areas under their control. This extreme pressure led to the conversion of some Armenians and to the exodus of others.⁴⁰ The oral tradition of Hamshen Armenians settled in the region of Ordu tells the story of derebeys inviting themselves to weddings in Armenian villages and forcing women to dance with them. During one such event, which took place in the early eighteenth century, a derebey raped one woman, following which he was killed by young Armenian men. The latter then fled to Ordu, but some of them were caught during their escape and had to convert to Islam to save their lives. According to this narrative, the Islamicized Hemshinli are the descendants of these converts.⁴¹

Oral accounts from Mala, a village of Platana (now the Akçaabat county) founded by Hamshen Armenians, similarly confirm the role of persecution by derebeys in the Islamicization of Hemshin. Four similar – but not identical – accounts of the settlement of Mala have reached us.⁴² As is unfortunately often the case with orally transmitted histories and traditions, these accounts are at times unreliable, particularly with regard to dates, and consequently, much caution must be exercised when using them. For example, Malkhas, who transcribed one of these accounts, describes the years from 1680 to 1700 in one of his studies and from 1720s to 1730s in another as the period of exodus from Hemshin.⁴³

All four versions agree that a group of Hamshen Armenians, under the leadership of a young man name Husēp' (Hovsēp', or Joseph in local dialect), fled their native district to escape oppression and settled in the densely forested valley of the Sera Dere, to the east of Platana (now Akçaabat; see Map 7.3). There they founded the village of Mala (now Cevizlik) and chose to keep its existence secret from outsiders, mainly to avoid interference by central government or derebeys, including demands for the payment of taxes. The decision of Husēp' and the other villagers to keep the existence of Mala secret is a confirmation of the role of oppressive taxation and persecution by derebeys in Hemshin, which left to its population only the choice between conversion and migration. As a result of their decision, Mala inhabitants were prevented from leaving the perimeter of the village and lived in total autarky. After thirty such years, the village was discovered when some of its inhabitants ventured to Trebizond (or Platana in some versions), following which officials were sent to Mala to collect the taxes owed by the villagers. The versions then differ. In most versions, the *yuzbaşı* (centurion) of the janissaries who had come to impose taxation was killed by Husēp'. The latter then went to Trebizond, where he managed to reach an agreement with officials that taxes for the past thirty years would be forgiven, and that from that date on, the village head would go once a year to Trebizond to negotiate with local authorities

the amount of taxes to be paid by Mala inhabitants. This agreement remained in place until the 1908 Revolution.⁴⁴

Sargis Haykuni, one of the founders of modern Armenian anthropology and a native of the Pontos, provided in his biography about the bandit Abrieōm one of the versions of the Mala events.⁴⁵ In this version, the man killed by Husēp' was an Armenian from Mala who had converted to Islam and was harassing his former fellow villagers out of jealousy for Husēp'. What ensued after the renegade's death was an attack on the village by janissaries, who killed Husēp'. His oldest son, Nahapet, was executed after refusing to save his life by converting to Islam, thus becoming a martyr. The youngest son, named Movsēs, accepted conversion and was taken to Platana, where he was married to a Turkish girl and became the founder of the Musli-oghli family.⁴⁶ In his introduction to Misak' T'orlak'ian's autobiography, Malkhas (Artashēs Hovsēp'ian), a native of the region and himself a descendant of Husēp', confirms that the members of the large Hovsēp'ian clan who settled in the Sera Dere, downstream from Mala, converted to Islam (see Map 7.3).⁴⁷ The middle son, Ōvanēs, fled to forests southeast of Trebizond, where he lived a savage's existence until he was discovered and taken in by Armenian villagers from Kalafka. Ōvanēs was married to a girl from Kalafka and was the ancestor, four generations back, of the bandit Abrieōm.⁴⁸

Unfortunately, key dates are inconsistent within Haykuni's text. He writes that Armenians were already settled in the village of Mala, in the district of Platana, 'some two hundred years ago'.⁴⁹ He does not tell us if the Armenian presence in Mala was two hundred years anterior to his visit to the village in 1858 to 1859, to the writing of his book in 1867 to 1890, or to its publication in 1905. Moreover, he states that Mala inhabitants lived an autonomous and secure existence in the 1730 to 1760 period, implying that the Mala massacre took place in the 1760s. His hero, Abrieōm, was born in 1795, and one wonders how four generations could have succeeded between 1760 and 1795, especially as Ōvanēs reportedly spent five to seven years in the forests and was married for twenty-five years before his wife gave birth to their son Husēp'.

It should be noted here that the original idea of using oral accounts from Mala to determine the period of Islamicization of Hemshin is to be credited to Barunak T'orlak'yan, the foremost expert on Hamshen Armenians in the Soviet Union and himself of Hamshenite descent. Unfortunately, T'orlak'yan relied solely on the account collected by Sargis Haykuni, which, as we have seen, is not without problems, and took at face value the dates provided by Haykuni, even though some of these dates contradicted one another.⁵⁰

The most reliable date in Haykuni's narrative is the 1795 birth date of the bandit Abrieōm, whose son Karapet was the godfather of Haykuni, himself born in 1838. If one takes an average of twenty-five years between generations, and adds another thirty years for the time Ōvanēs supposedly spent in the forests and was childless, Ōvanēs would have been born around 1670, and the Mala events would have taken place when he was around 20 years old, *circa* 1690. His father Husēp' would have been born around 1640 to 1645, and would have led the migration from Hemshin during the 1660s when still a young man. This calculation,

which falls relatively close to the 1680 to 1700 date provided by Malkhas in his autobiography, points to the second half of the seventeenth century as the period during which the rise of intolerance against Christians and their persecution by derebeys led to the conversion of part of Hemshin's population and the exodus of those refusing Islamicization.⁵¹

Migrations and further conversions: the cases of Karadere and Khurshunlu

Outmigration of Christians was the counterpart to conversion and the second most important development in the history of Hemshin for the period between the 1630s and the 1850s, and possibly even later. As seen in the case of Mala, however, migration to other areas of the Pontos was not sufficient to preserve oneself and one's family from Islamicization. Fugitives from Hemshin who settled in other parts of the Pontos were often caught up by religious persecution in their new locations and ultimately forced to convert. In addition to Mala, two other communities established by Hamshenite Armenians were subjected to Islamicization: Karadere (now the Araklı county) and Khurshunli (also known as Khurshunlu or Kurshumli, to the south of Çarşamba).

The Karadere (Hyssos, Sew Get in Armenian) Valley, located to the east of Trebizond, was one of the major routes of passage connecting Bayburt and the Anatolian hinterland with the Pontic coast (see Map 7.3). This valley constituted the western part of the Sourmaina/Sürmene district in Trapezuntine and Ottoman times.⁵² This district seems to have had some Armenian population from the Middle Ages on. Armenian sources mention the presence of three medieval monasteries, two of which (St Vardan and St Isaac) were located 'in the town of Sürmene', and one, Surb Khach' (Holy Cross) of Asamut or Arsumat, in the upper reaches of the district, within an hour's walk southward from Madur Tepesi. However, aside from their names, little else is known about these monasteries, and no manuscripts possibly copied in them have reached us.⁵³

A second migration wave seems to have started in the sixteenth century, originating mostly from Baberd (Bayburt), located to the immediate south of Karadere, and to a lesser extent from Ispir. Place names in Karadere identical to ones in Bayburt indicate that migrants named their new settlements after their villages of origin.⁵⁴ Armenian presence is attested in Ottoman registers, which list first names such as Merkul, Kirkor, Tomas, Asdor, Ovenes and Mardaros for inhabitants of the Mincano village.⁵⁵ According to T'umayian, Armenians who settled there to flee 'violence and oppression' were invited by the derebeys – or timar holders, since derebeys appeared later – of Karadere/Sürmene to 'cultivate the land or to fight their enemies'.⁵⁶ A similar influx of Greeks fleeing the Islamicization of the Of district is reported to have taken place during the same period.⁵⁷ The immigration of Greeks and Armenians could explain the sudden rise in population and number of villages of the Sürmene district reported in Ottoman registers for the period between 1553 and 1583.⁵⁸ Construction of the large Armenian church in the village of T'rëts'or (later Tsimla, Cimla or Zimla),

built – according to oral traditions – around the end of the sixteenth century and transformed in 1850 into a hayloft, can probably be credited to migrants from Bayburt.⁵⁹ In some cases, migration appears to have taken place even earlier, as in the case of Mincano, where Armenian names are listed in a 1515 to 1516 register.⁶⁰

The Armenian population of the district was increased during the seventeenth century, when settlers from Bayburt were joined by fugitives from Hamshen.⁶¹ The latter must have been much more numerous than the former and assimilated them, because refugees who fled Karadere during the eighteenth century would identify themselves and be known by other Armenians as *Hamshēnahayer*, or Hamshen Armenians. Another possible explanation of the Hamshenite dominance in Armenian rural communities all along the Black Sea coast could be that, when forced to flee, settlers from Bayburt returned south to their district of origin in the Armenian Plateau rather than moving westward towards other areas of the Pontos with Hamshen Armenians. Indeed, one-tenth of the fugitives from Karadere are estimated to have fled towards Bayburt.⁶²

Haykuni collected and transcribed in an article published in 1895 in the journal *Ararat* the oral account of the Islamicization of Karadere Armenians.⁶³ He thus provided us with a highly detailed – albeit romanticized and transformed with the passage of time – account of the conversion process as it took place in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Pontos. Before starting the narrative, Haykuni mentioned two factors which facilitated the conversion of Karadere. The first factor was the hostility between Armenians and Greeks, which continued even after the Greeks of Of and the Armenians of Karadere had passed over to Islam. The second factor was the lack of spiritual leaders, since the thirty-six villages of Karadere were served by only one priest.⁶⁴ Both of these elements mirrored the context of Hemshin, where the rivalry between Laz and Armenians and the weakness of the Church following the decline of the Hamshen diocese may have played a significant role in the conversion process.

In the oral account provided in Haykuni's article, however, outright persecution was the main factor leading to the Islamicization of Karadere, with one *Ghuruf-oghli* (probably *Rauf-oghli*) *Mōlla Mēhmēt* playing the role of chief culprit. According to this account, Mehmed Raufoglu was a mullah from Sürmene who was 'so fanatic that he intended to obtain the conversion of all Christians to Islam within a twinkling'.⁶⁵ Mehmed Raufoglu recruited and indoctrinated forty young men who were then sent to the Karadere Valley to preach the Muslim faith. Raufoglu and his newly ordained mullahs registered some success in their missionary activity, finding a number of Armenians willing to listen to their sermons and even to acknowledge that 'Muhammad was a true prophet and the Qur'an holy'. Haykuni believes Armenians were acting out of fear and responding 'to the necessities of the time and to politics', as the mullahs often mixed threats with persuasion, claiming that a 'great army would be sent by the Sultan to punish Armenians if they did not convert'.⁶⁶ Interpreting the response as acceptance of Islam, the mullahs proselytizing in Karadere gave reports to their co-religionists in Sürmene and elsewhere about the number of converts in every village of the district. After ten years of such proselytizing, the people who had appeared favourable to the speeches of the mullahs were invited to officially accept Islam. The reaction of

the people that Raufoğlu and his companions had considered to be won over to their cause was, however, negative, and the mullahs were expelled from Karadere.

Humiliated by this rejection, the mullahs resorted to treachery and announced that the Armenians of Karadere were about to officially convert and that they had invited the mullahs to organize a great ceremony to mark the event. The mullahs claimed that it was the duty of all good Muslims to be present at such a ceremony. Consequently, a few thousand men gathered in a cortege led by Raufoğlu and entered the Karadere Valley. Upon entering the first Armenian village, the mullahs asked individuals who had accepted Islam to come forward. When villagers told them that there was no one willing to become Muslim in the entire district, the mullahs interrogated those whom they had considered to have assented to conversion on the reasons for this staunch negative attitude. The answer of those interrogated was that the soul of Christian resistance in Karadere was embodied in the priest Tēr Karapet from the village of T'orosli, who enjoyed the overwhelming support of the population. Moreover, any converts would be punished immediately by the Armenians. The Muslim crowd then headed towards T'orosli (Toroslu, now the Kayaici village of the Araklı county), where they were stopped at the entrance of the village by a hundred armed men sent by Tēr Karapet. Threatening a fight to the death, the Armenians asked the mullahs and their followers not to enter the village and to leave immediately. Seeing that they were surrounded by Toroslu's population, the mullahs and their followers wisely chose to withdraw.

The discomfiture of Raufoğlu, his mullahs and other honourable Muslims was widely considered an offence to Islam. Gathered in Sürmene, muftis, judges (*kadis*) and other learned religious figures expressed the opinion that although the Qur'an ordered the protection of Christians, the actions of the Armenians constituted apostasy, which was punishable by death. Karadere Armenians had not only fooled God's Prophet, but they were also rebels, and not only their adults but their children as well must be passed by the sword 'to extirpate this race of unbelievers from the face of the earth'. This opinion was transmitted to the authorities in Trebizond, who sent forces to join a large Muslim mob preparing to march on Toroslu.⁶⁷

The village was surrounded by surprise on Holy Saturday (Easter Eve), when all its inhabitants were in the church. Tēr Karapet was the first to be killed and his body cut into pieces, following which a large number of people, including children and the elderly, were massacred. The killing continued until the 'cowards' begged for its halt, promising to convert the next day. During the night, those committed most devoutly to their religion gathered their families and fled westward into the deep forests of the district. The remains of Tēr Karapet's dismembered body were assembled and carried away by some of the fugitives. His family settled in the village of Kalafka (now Kōmürçü, in the Yomra county), where part of his remains were buried, with the rest taken to Bayburt. The Toroslu scenario was repeated the same day in all the villages of Karadere. The next day, on Easter Sunday, five hundred of the most prominent men of the district gathered near the church of Toroslu and officially converted. A week later, a ceremony was held for the conversion of the relatives of these men.⁶⁸

A slightly different version of the Karadere events is available in T'umayian's study on Armenians of the Pontos. As in Haykuni's article, Mehmed Raufoğlu is

presented as a fanatic, albeit as a derebey, not a mullah. He did not indoctrinate forty young Turks, but organized a ceremony in the village of Tsimla for the conversion of forty young Armenians. The river running by the village was turned red by blood during the three days of the ceremony. Horrified by the bloodshed and the excesses of Raufoğlu, some of the mullahs disavowed his actions and turned their backs on him. The next day, when the derebey was marching on the last remaining Armenian village of the district, P'irvanē (Pervane), with the intention of Islamicizing it, he was ambushed and killed by his enemies. It was in this way that Pervane was saved from conversion.⁶⁹ According to yet another version, Pervane was saved because a local agha, Mahmud Suiçmezoğlu, wanted to keep the fifteen or sixteen Christian households of the village to guard his harem, 'because derebeys did not trust Turks for that function'.⁷⁰

Whether they took place in Toroslu or Tsimla, the extreme acts of violence committed during the conversion of Karadere Armenians left an indelible mark on their descendants, both Christians and Muslims, for centuries to come. Thus an elderly woman, who was a devout Muslim, told Haykuni that her ancestors accepted Islam as the true faith only after the prophet Muhammad accomplished the 'miracle of turning Karadere into blood for seven days'.⁷¹

The differences between these versions show again how much caution must be used when consulting oral history. The problems with the use of such accounts are summarized by Margarita Poutouridou who, in her article on the Of district, explains that as

time passes, the memory of historical events tends to metamorphose and become codified. Later generations often improvise when it comes to filling in the gaps in their local histories. On occasion, stories are improved so as to better express the ideals of the group. The community's accumulated experiences and the changes in living conditions also play a role in how collective memory is passed on.⁷²

Like the narratives of Greek scholars studying the Islamicization of the Of district, Haykuni's historical account also reflects the patriotic and even nationalist preoccupations of the author and his time. These preoccupations could help explain the emphasis on religious oppression and the bloody nature of Islamicization as the almost exclusive rationale for conversion.⁷³ Nevertheless, once these considerations have been taken into account, the oral tradition collected by Haykuni provides important knowledge which can help clarify the picture of the conversion process in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Pontos. The rivalry between Armenians and Greeks, the weakness of the Armenian clergy in the region, the role of the Islamic religious establishment and of the derebeys, the overall climate of persecution, the use of coercion, and the swift conversion of the wealthy to preserve their possessions emerge as some of the factors which played an important role in the Islamicization of Karadere Armenians.

Authors disagree on the timing of the Karadere events. According to Haykuni, the Karadere massacre took place in 1708 to 1710, while the eminent linguist Hrach'eay

Acharian places it in 1715.⁷⁴ Citing a manuscript he saw in the village of Uzi Samira, T'umayian argues that Islamicization, although it had started decades earlier, was ultimately not achieved until 1780, when the village of Khakhagh, at the upper end of Karadere, was converted.⁷⁵ The only problem with his assertion is that Khakhagh is unheard of in other sources, and we do not know to what modern village it corresponds, if it ever existed at all.⁷⁶ In support of T'umayian, however, Mkhit'ariants' mentions that the derebeys of Trebizond, including one named *Momosh* (probably a corrupt form of Memiş), burned down the houses of the Greeks and Armenians of Sürmene and Islamicized them at some point during the 1760s to 1780s.⁷⁷ This episode, or the one narrated by T'umayian, is possibly corroborated by a 1783 document from the Ottoman archives, which mentions that one *sipahi* named Mehmed committed *zorbalıklar* (i.e. acts of tyranny, violence) in the Sürmene *nahiye* (district).⁷⁸ The activity of bandits such as the Sipahi Mehmed appears to have even extended to the southern side of the Pontic Mountains, since an attack by the 'Laz' (i.e. Muslims from the Black Sea region) is reported to have taken place around that period in Bayburt. The villages of the district were plundered and destroyed, and some of the inhabitants were forced to convert to Islam.⁷⁹

The pervasive *Hamshēnahay* self-description, and the absence of a *Karadērēahay* (or *Sewgetahay*) one in Armenian rural communities of the Pontos may weigh in favour of the earlier conversion date, as they could be a reflection of the little time spent by Hamshen refugees in Karadere. The brevity of their stay in the district may not have allowed for a Karadere identity to take hold and replace the emotional bond with Hamshen. Around sixty years would separate the likely arrival date of the first families from Hemshin during the 1650s from the Karadere events, had these events taken place around 1708 to 1715. One last possibility is that two waves of persecution could have affected the Karadere/Sürmene district, one at the beginning of the eighteenth century and one towards its end, translating into two separate periods of Islamicization and thus reconciling the two divergent opinions on the date of conversion. Yet this hypothesis does not provide us with any answer on whether Mehmed Raufoğlu really existed, and if he did, on the period in which he was active. It would be tempting of course to link the Sipahi Mehmed of the Turkish sources or the Memiş mentioned by Mkhit'ariants' with Mehmed Raufoğlu, but any such attempt would be purely speculative, given the very large number of individuals called Mehmed or Memiş.

Whether Mehmed Raufoğlu existed or not, what is certain is that Armenians suddenly disappeared from the Karadere Valley. Turkish sources confirm a reflux towards the Armenian Plateau. Bilgin explains an outmigration of 'Gregorian Turks' – a preposterous term invented by Turkish nationalist authors in an attempt to deny any historical Armenian presence in Anatolia – in terms of a sudden climate change. As explained by Hagop Hachikian in this volume, however, his argument is not convincing, because people wanting to escape the new, colder climate would have little incentive to move to the even colder eastern Anatolian region.⁸⁰ Without citing any causes for their departure, Bilgin also mentions that the Armenians – this time using the term 'Armenians' and not 'Christian Turks' – of Karadere moved to eastern Anatolia and Russia, and that the few who remained were gathered in

Pervane and Mahtile.⁸¹ The change of climate that led to the disappearance of the Armenian community of Karadere/Sürmene was without doubt more of a political than a meteorological sort.

According to Haykuni, one-tenth of the fugitives from Karadere went to Bayburt, one-fifth to villages around Trebizond, and the rest to the sancak of Canik.⁸² The villages where they settled, located in the hills above the coastal towns and cities of Yomra, Trebizond, Platana (Akçaabat), Ordu, Fatsa, Ünye, Terme, Çarşamba, Samsun, Bafra and Sinop, most likely already housed an Armenian population that had arrived directly from Hemshin without going through Karadere. One of the earliest established groups of Hamshenite villages in Canik was Khurshunli (also known as Khurshunlu or Kurshumli, in the kaza of Çarşamba, to the south of the city of the same name). Bzhshkian's text seems to imply that the inhabitants of Khurshunli had come directly from Hamshen, while according to Mkhitar'iants' and T'umayian, Khurshunlu's Armenians hailed from Karadere.⁸³

We have seen with the case of Mala that migration was often not sufficient to preserve a population from forced Islamicization. T'umayian states that many of the fugitives from Karadere were later forced to convert. Such was, according to him, the case of all those who went to Canik. Mkhitar'iants' states that the ones who went to Canik and settled in the 'Ghurshunlu Dere' had already been Islamicized in Sürmene (Karadere).⁸⁴ This claim, although unlikely, since the main goal of people leaving their native district was to escape conversion, is not completely implausible. The abuses by the Sipahi Mehmed mentioned in Turkish sources could have caused an exodus out of Sürmene not only of Christians, but also of recently Islamicized Armenians.⁸⁵ Notwithstanding the moment and place of their conversion, the Islamicized Armenians that settled in Canik secretly maintained their Christian faith.⁸⁶

It is in this context that the episode of the Khurshunlu Armenians' return to Christianity took place, an episode that deserves mention because of its character, as remarkable as rare. In 1789, the former governor (*vali*) of Trebizond Canikli Battal Hüseyin Pasha betrayed the Sultan and went over to Russia. During his stay in St Petersburg, he received 'honours and help' from Archbishop Hovsēp' Arghut'iants', Primate of the Armenians of Russia and future *Catholicos*, and enjoyed the protection of the latter, who was quite influential at the court of the Romanovs. Moved by gratitude, Battal Hüseyin Pasha promised the Archbishop that he would grant freedom of worship to the Islamicized Armenians living in his fief of Canik. Upon his return to the Ottoman empire in 1799, where he recovered and held his former position of governor of Trebizond until his death in 1801, Battal Hüseyin Pasha respected his promise and ordered Islamicized Armenians to revert to Christianity.⁸⁷ As a probable result of this authorization, the Surb Geōrg (St George) Church of Khurshunlu, the first Armenian church built by Hamshen Armenians in Canik, was consecrated in 1799.⁸⁸ Bzhshkian, who passed through the region a few years later, around 1817, described Khurshunlu Armenians in the following terms:

They are Armenians from Hamshēn. All are registered as hereditary soldiers, and they have [as] a commander an Armenian prince who rules over them. They fear no one. They only go to war with the derebey, and they are strong men.⁸⁹

Islamicization and crypto-Christianity

The presence of a small number of Christians in Hemshin at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a century and a half after the beginning of the conversions, demonstrates the extent of time necessary to achieve Islamicization.⁹⁰ The Christian presence also meant that most of the villages of Hemshin – with the possible exclusion of Lower and Upper Viçe and the Hala Dere, which may have become entirely Islamicized early on – had a mixed population between the mid-seventeenth and the early nineteenth centuries. The composition of the population mix, however, varied throughout this period, with a gradual decline in numbers of Christians and a converse increase in the share of Muslims. The religious context was, however, more complicated than that, since the boundary between Christians and Muslims in Hemshin was blurred by the existence of yet a third category composed of crypto-Christians known as *kēskēs* (Arm. half-half).

Thus, while the village of Çötenes (now Ormancık, in Kaptanpaşa) may have possibly had a mosque as early as the 1640s,⁹¹ the Senoz Dere area of Hemshin in which it was located still had a substantial Christian population a few decades later. A colophon added in 1710 in the village of Dölēnits' (Tölēnits', Tolenic or Tolones, now Yeşiltepe) to a manuscript originally copied in Karin (Garin, Erzurum) in 1673 mentions the passing away of the priest Tēr Vardan, and provides the names of members of his family.⁹² Similarly, according to oral traditions, the village of Tepan in the valley of the Susa or Zuğa Dere (now Bilen, in the Hemşin county) held out for some time after neighbouring villages had converted, thus becoming the last village of the valley to accept Islam.⁹³ These examples of a simultaneous Christian and Muslim presence in nearby villages or even within the same village were in all likelihood replicated in most other areas of Hemshin.

It is not known whether conversions were taking place at a regular, steady pace following the first conversions of the mid-seventeenth century, or whether Islamicization progressed through episodic crisis periods with a high number of conversions, between which intervened years of lull in shift of religious allegiance. Such a crisis could have taken place during the 1720s, some seventy years after the beginning of the conversion process in Hemshin. Malkhas mentions an exodus from Hemshin during the 1720s and 1730s, which he blames on oppression by the derebeys.⁹⁴ Another author, Atrpet, writes that Arif-Ahmed Pasha forced some Hamshen Armenians to convert in 1723.⁹⁵ Arif-Ahmed Pasha, or Ârifi Ahmed Pasha, was placed in charge of military operations in Georgia and Iran in 1722 to 1723.⁹⁶ Did Ârifi Ahmed Pasha inaugurate operations against enemies outside the empire by a campaign against elements deemed suspicious inside? Was there a will to consolidate border areas against the looming Russian threat by eliminating Christians? Unfortunately, in the absence of sources confirming such action on Atrpet's part, it is difficult to provide any answers to these questions and determine the role – if any – played by Ârifi Ahmed Pasha in the conversion of Hamshen Armenians.

Whether Ârifi Ahmed Pasha played a role in it or not, the rate of conversions increased during the first decades of the eighteenth century. Tashian's statement that the Islamicization of Hamshen started at the end of the seventeenth century

but made significant progress only in the eighteenth is vindicated by the recently published work of two local Hemshinli historians, Veysel Atacan and Serdar Bekar, on the subject of Ottoman tombstones in Hemshin.⁹⁷ Of the 151 tombstones recorded by these two authors for the period between 1699 and 1925, only thirty-two belong to the eighteenth century, seventy-three to the nineteenth, and forty-six to the first quarter of the twentieth century. The median year is 1884, with half of the tombstones preceding that date and half following it.⁹⁸ This statistic must obviously be treated with caution, since older tombstones are more likely to have fallen into decay or been destroyed. Such must have been the case of the tombstones of sixteenth-century Ottoman officials and soldiery who were posted in Hemshin, none of which were found by Atacan and Bekar. Yet, even taking this into consideration, the numbers are compelling. There are twice as many tombstones for the nineteenth century as for the eighteenth. Within the eighteenth century there are only nine tombstones for the first half of the century against twenty-three for the second half. Given the absence of a population boom in Hemshin during that period, the increase in the number of recorded Muslim tombstones may be explained in terms of an increase in the number of converts during the first half of the eighteenth century.

The building of mosques should normally accompany conversion to Islam. Bryer, who on the basis of Gökbilgin's 1962 article in *Belleten* believed that the Hemshinli had started to convert in the sixteenth century, wrote that the 'Hemşinli and Laz may have been converted early to Islam, but they have no mosque earlier than of the twentieth century to show for it'.⁹⁹ Bryer was slightly mistaken, because there were some mosques in Hemshin before the twentieth century, yet they were so few that he cannot be blamed entirely. Aside from the seventeenth-century mosque in Cötenes/Ormanlık – about which we know only through the berat mentioned by Atacan and Bekar, the present building having been constructed in 1826 – there are only two mosques built before the late nineteenth century. Both of these mosques, built in 1774 and 1791 respectively, are located within the Mutlu quarter (formerly the Bodullu village) of Hemşin Ortaköy (Zuğaortaköy).¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, churches remained standing in villages which still had some Christian population at the time of Inchichian's writing in the early nineteenth century even though there were no clergymen to serve in these churches, except for the priest of Evoghiwt (Eghiovit or Elevit), who visited them a few times a year.¹⁰¹

The rarity of mosques in a district where a substantial portion of the population had accepted Islam may be linked to the circumstances of conversion. Having taken place under duress, the Islamicization of Hemshin Armenians remained superficial for decades if not centuries to come. As in the case of the Pontic Greek communities of Kromni (Kurum), Santa and Stavri, Hamshen Armenians developed their own brand of crypto-Christianity following their conversion. Inchichian writes that 'the Muslims speak Armenian to this day; in the villages they use the names *knk'ahayr* [godfather; italics added in this and the next quote] and *knk'amayr* [godmother]; they keep Lent and other rites and rules of the Christian faith; they attend church, etc.; some are *kēskēs* by faith, showing only outwardly

to being Muslims'.¹⁰² Another Mekhitarist, Bzhshkian, who visited the region in 1817, states:

The Hamshēnts'ik' are *kēskēs* [italics added in this quote], many have converted, but they have kept the Christian customs and do not miss prayers and alms-giving; at *Vardavar* [Transfiguration of Christ] and *Verap'okhum* [Assumption] almost all go to church, light candles, and make sacrifices for the souls of their ancestors; all speak Armenian.¹⁰³

Kēskēs (western Armenian *gēsḡēs*), or half-half, the name with which the crypto-Christians of Hemshin were described, was the Armenian equivalent of the Greek terms *linovamvakoi* (linen-cottons) and *meso-meso*, used respectively in Cyprus and in the Pontos.¹⁰⁴ In the Armenian experience, crypto-Christians known as *kēskēs* were not limited to Hamshen. Inchichian notes that in the neighbourhood of Chipin (Jibin, now Saylakkaya, near Halfeti in the Şanlı Urfa province), on the left bank of the Euphrates, stood three villages, Arah, Hayni and K'ēshishlik', the *kēskēs* population of which spoke an Armenian dialect close to *Grabar*, or Classical Armenian.¹⁰⁵ *Kēskēs* could even be found further south in Tripoli, in today's Lebanon. In 1659, Capuchin missionaries from Touraine reported that a destitute Armenian pilgrim on his way to Jerusalem was given alms by crypto-Christians. The latter were said to be called '*gues ou Guez* [italics added], qui veut dire moitié par moitié, paroissants turcs et secrètement reçoivent les Sacrements des Arméniens et jeusnent tant qu'ils peuvent'.¹⁰⁶

In his study on crypto-Christians of Turkey, R. M. Dawkins distinguished between four categories of people with divided or ambivalent religious affiliations. The first group consisted of individuals who had converted to Islam through dervish proselytism and adhered to the syncretism between Christianity and Islam preached by Sufi brotherhoods. Some of the latter also spread 'indifferentism and the doctrine that salvation was to be won by faithfulness to a man's own religion, whatever it was'.¹⁰⁷ The second category sprang partly from this doctrine, and comprised people who were indifferent to religious matters. These people simply wanted the best from both sides, 'anxious for all that can be got in the way of spiritual but especially material help from whatever holy man and holy places and rites may be at hand'.¹⁰⁸ The third category included the 'imperfectly converted', whose love of their former faith made it difficult for them to abandon all elements of it, especially in cases of forced conversion. Having retained elements of their former religion because they 'may well have found it impossible to destroy what they held so sacred', these people were thus caught in 'struggles and hesitations'.¹⁰⁹ Yet there is no evidence to determine in what religion, old or new, they believed more. Meanwhile, genuine crypto-Christians, the fourth category, were supposed 'to believe in Christianity and hate Islam'. What also separated the 'imperfectly converted' from authentic crypto-Christians was concealment, 'which is of the very essence of Crypto-Christianity'.¹¹⁰ In the case of Hemshin, the first category may be eliminated at the outset, since no Sufi influences were at play in provoking conversion. Yet the little evidence that is

available makes it difficult to determine into which of the other three categories the Hemshinli, the converted Armenians of Hemshin, could be classified. Were the Hemshinli who perpetuated various Christian customs imperfect converts or genuine crypto-Christians? Was a woman who prayed in a church for the recovery of her sick child religiously indifferent, trying to get help from every corner, or was she an authentic crypto-Christian? Similarly, what was the status of the Muslims who took the pilgrimage to the Khach'ik'ear (Khach'ek'ar) Monastery,¹¹¹ 'religious indifferents' or crypto-Christians?

The observation of the Transfiguration of Christ, or *Vardavař* (western Armenian *Vartavař*), best symbolizes the complexity of the religious status of converted Hemshinli with regard to crypto-Christianity. This celebration initially had a clear religious content; in the early decades of the nineteenth century, at the time of Bzhshkian's writing, it was the occasion of a visit to church. The celebration of Vardavař probably maintained at least part of its religious character until the latter half of the nineteenth century, and was interpreted as such by Muslim religious authorities. In 1893, Hemshinli then working in southern Russia told the local correspondent of the Tiflis (Tbilisi) Armenian-language paper *Nor-Dar* that they still continued to observe Vardavař and that when they had been ordered by the *Sheikh ul-Islam* to stop doing so, they had replied that 'they would still celebrate it even if tied to the mouth of a cannon'.¹¹² Yet Vardavař, celebrated to this day by Rize Hemshinli, lost all religious meaning at some point during the twentieth century.¹¹³ Even less is known about the context in which Vardavař was celebrated by converted Armenians in other regions, such as Erzuka (Erzincan) or Sasun.¹¹⁴

The perpetuation of baptism until the late nineteenth century is, after Vardavař, the most widely publicized Christian custom retained by the Hemshinli, as it was reported by Vital Cuinet in *La Turquie d'Asie*. Cuinet described how Hemshinli families – which he called *Hamchounlis* – kept 'holy water' preciously (chrism, *miwřon* in Armenian) to baptise their children. The water diminished by usage or evaporation was replenished with ordinary water, which, mixed with the older water, received the sacred character necessary for baptism ceremonies.¹¹⁵ In the absence of churches and priests, Hemshinli had transferred to the private sphere rituals normally performed by clergy, and in the case of the consecration of the chrism, or *miwřonōrhñēk'*, this extended to a ceremony which could take place only with the participation of the supreme head of the Armenian Church, the Catholicos. Not all families, however, appeared to renew chrism in their homes. According to Hemshinli informants, on 6 January, the day of Epiphany, mothers would force their children to enter water and swim, because on that day 'the Holy Cross was present in the water'. The regret of not having chrism at their disposal was expressed in the moving statement made to their children on this occasion that 'we do not have miwřon on our faces, hence we do not have shame; this water purifies you, Swim, our ancestors have always done so'.¹¹⁶

In 1775 a Venice Mekhitarist, Father Poghos Mēhērian, commissioned a deacon in Karin (Erzurum) who also happened to be a peddler to buy manuscripts while touring the provinces for his trade. The peddler, who stayed in the home of a Muslim family in Hamshen on a Saturday night, noticed a lamp burning at

a distance. The peddler was told that the lamp was lighted every Saturday evening in honour of the *Incil* (Gospel) they had inherited from their ancestors. The family had been forced to convert to Islam some sixty years earlier, around 1715, because of 'Turkish [i.e. Muslim] oppression'. The peddler, seeing the venerable manuscript – which was not a Gospel but a *Mashtots* (book of rituals) copied in the ninth or tenth century – proposed to buy it, but the owners first refused, saying they did not want to sell the manuscript, which they considered the blessing (*bereket*) of their home. After much insistence on the peddler's part, the owners finally relented and sold him the manuscript for the amount of sixty *paras*. The peddler took it to Mēhērian in Karin, from where it was sent to the Mekhitarist monastery on San Lazzaro island in Venice (ms. 457).¹¹⁷ This last narrative leaves unanswered the question of the religious identity of the Hemshinli family owning the manuscript. The lighting of the lamp and the respect displayed towards the manuscript may indicate a crypto-Christian identity reminiscent of *Marranos* practices.¹¹⁸ However, the text may alternatively lead one to believe that the family was more 'imperfectly converted' than crypto-Christian, given the quasi-superstitious character of their use of the manuscript as a bearer of blessing to their home along with their ultimate willingness to part with it in exchange for a modest sum of money.

Mēhērian also provides in his unpublished travel notes another instance in which the affection of converts towards their former faith is displayed. In September 1776, he visited the village of Khewak (Khevag/Khevak/Heveg-i Kiskim, now Yaylalar, in the Yusufeli county of the Artvin province), which counted some two hundred Islamicized households and five or six openly Christian ones. Khevak, located to the south of the Kaçkar/Barhal Mountains, was not part of Hemshin, but was located immediately to its southeast, which may explain why it was considered to be part of Hemshin by both Mēhērian and Inchichian.¹¹⁹ The Islamicization of Khevak had taken place during earlier decades of the eighteenth century.¹²⁰ Mēhērian describes how, when he entered the village, 'peasant men and women who had been Turkified [i.e. Islamicized] came from left and right to kiss my hand'. Having noticed that the villagers knelt down to listen to the Mass given on a portable altar by one of the priests accompanying him, Mēhērian 'deduced that these people had converted from the Armenian faith, but had not forgotten it'. He looked for the village church, found it had been abandoned, had it opened and cleaned, and celebrated Mass in it on the day of *Surb Khach* (Holy Cross). Although he tried to prevent them from entering the church, the 'Armenians who had forsaken their faith forced the doors of the church and attended the service'. After Mass was over,

those who had denied their Christian faith implored me to bless the graves of their forebears, because I was told, their departed kin were, after all, Christians. Others bewailed the renouncing of their faith and begged to confess their sins, especially the elders. I ministered to the spiritual needs of the older women who had not forsaken their faith and granted them forgiveness. I asked the newly ordained priest, Father Sērobē, to take care of their spiritual needs.¹²¹

Differences in religious practice between genders emerge from this and other examples, with women remaining more faithful to Christianity than men. Pirō, the author of the 1893 article on the Hemshinli in *Nor-Dar*, wrote that ‘mothers have remained more Armenian than fathers...[and] they worship to this day Armenian monasteries and churches’.¹²² According to this article, mothers often asked their sons to take them on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. As a result of the religious schism between genders, many Hemshinli families had a Muslim father and a Christian mother.¹²³ To further complicate the picture, the religious divide cut not only across genders, but in some families separated brothers as well, with one being Christian and the other Muslim.¹²⁴

Moreover, religious affiliation and practices sometimes varied according to geography, or more precisely, altitude. It is interesting to note that Mutlu (Bodullu), where the two mosques built in 1774 and 1791 are to be found, is located in a low-lying area not too distant from the coast, on the northern edge of Hemshin. This would tend to confirm the hypothesis that Islamicization progressed from the coast up, with inhabitants of northernmost villages becoming more wholeheartedly Muslim earlier than those of mountainous settlements. The Islamicization process of northern villages may have been facilitated by the large-scale migration of Christians out of the district beginning in the mid-seventeenth century. Outmigration may have been complemented by inner migration, with the remnants of the openly Christian population of northern, low-lying villages taking refuge in areas of Hemshin located deeper in the mountains, in a ‘flight to the highlands’ similar to that which took place among the Pontic Greeks.¹²⁵ The last Christian village of Hemshin, Eghiovit/Elevit, was obviously the primary destination of these migrants. In addition to its operating church, Eghiovit offered easy access through mountain paths to the relative safety of the Armenian Catholic stronghold of Khodorchur (Armenian Khotorjur), south of the Kaçkar range, where a number of families from Hamshen ultimately settled (see Map 7.2).¹²⁶

Yet the hypothesis that openly Christian populations prevailed longer in highland areas of Hemshin is not unproblematic. The intervention of other factors even makes the altitude argument sometimes appear outright inaccurate, as in the case of the Khala/Hala Valley, Islamicized in its integrity, irrespectively of altitude, probably due to its vicinity with the Lazi.¹²⁷ In the valley of the Senoz Dere, the village of Cötenes/Ormançık, where a mosque was supposedly built in the 1640s, stood at a higher altitude than Tolones/Yeşiltepe, which had a church and a priest until at least 1710 (see Map 2.1).¹²⁸ Similarly, while Inchichian reports that Eghiovit/Elevit was still Christian until the early nineteenth century, he also mentions that the inhabitants of ‘Bash Hamshen’ (i.e. most probably the village also known as Aşağı Hemşin, now Sıraköy), located at the same altitude and in the same valley, ‘were generally Muslims’.¹²⁹ The difference in religious affiliation between these two settlements may have to do with the absence of a church in Bash Hamshen and the presence of one – the former Khach‘ek‘ar Monastery – in Eghiovit, which helped fend off Muslim encroachments. Moreover, the building of the mosques in Mutlu in 1774 and 1791 took place almost simultaneously with or preceded by only a few years the conversion of half of the population of Eghiovit. The two events may have

both been part of one same and final push aimed at completing the Islamicization process of the Hemshin district by furthering the Islamicization of already converted people and achieving the conversion of any remaining Christians. Thus the highland refuge of Eghiovit/Elevit did not survive by much longer the Islamicization of the northernmost lowlands of Hemshin. The remaining Christians of Elevit gradually abandoned the village during the nineteenth century. Such was the case of four families who, led by their priest Tēr Karapet Hamashēnts'i, moved to the village of Khach'kavank', near Erzurum, in May 1858. Britain's consul in Trebizond, William Gifford Palgrave, was obviously mistaken when he reported to his superiors that the 'Hamsheen Nahiya' counted some 3,000 Armenians out of a total population of 20,000 in 1868. By his own admittance, he had not yet visited the district when he gave this estimate.¹³⁰ In later writings, Palgrave would adopt the much lower figure of twenty-three Armenian families, in line with the official Ottoman statistics of that period.¹³¹ Thus, according to the *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi* (yearbook of the Trebizond province), the Hemshin nahiye counted only twenty-four Armenian families in 1869 and twenty-three in 1870.¹³²

Although mountains were thus not able to offer shelter to openly Christian people in Hemshin, they nevertheless played a role in the development of Hemshin identity. Bryer once noted that 'the bounds of the Ottoman Empire were not two-dimensional but vertical too, ending (as in the Pontos) at between 1,000 and 2,000 m, above which the mountains offered a kind of freedom'.¹³³ This freedom, while insufficient in the case of Hemshin to preserve an openly Christian population, allowed for various Christian rites and customs practised by converted populations, either crypto-Christians or 'imperfect converts', to survive. Conversely, mountains also permitted newly converted populations to get away with half-hearted acceptance of Islam and lack of zeal in following rules and precepts prescribed by it. It seems likely that some Hemshinli had two or even three sets of religious behaviour, with the practice of Islamic rituals increasing while visiting the coast, diminishing in their villages, and disappearing completely in their summer pastures. It is doubtful that the unique, modern-day Hemshinli identity could have emerged without the perpetuation of various Christian traditions made possible by the freedom of life in the mountains, even if these traditions have lost their original religious meaning with time.

To conclude this section, it may be said that of the four categories described by Dawkins, three – religious indifferents, imperfectly converted and genuine crypto-Christians – were probably present in Hemshin during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as may be seen from the illustrations provided above. Genuine crypto-Christianity was probably predominant in the early stages following conversion, but faded away with the passage of time, leaving in its place only relics of Christian rites and customs which an 'imperfectly converted' population found difficult to part with. In some cases, these relics may have lost with time some of their original religious meaning and amounted to little more than superstitious practices. The Islamicization of Hemshin was largely accomplished by the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1869, the Hemshin nahiye counted some fifteen mosques (*camis*) and forty smaller ones (*mescits*).¹³⁴

Outside Elevit, the Christian faith probably had only a limited, feminine following, and genuine crypto-Christianity was much reduced by then. That Islam had been accepted by the population of Hemshin is proved by the large number of doctors in theology (*ulemas*) which the district produced from the second half of the nineteenth century to the fall of the Ottoman Empire.¹³⁵ Yet acceptance of Islam remained lukewarm, despite the mosques and the local ulemas. Palgrave, who reached the centre of the district of 'Hamshun' in the summer of 1872 after 'three days of such breakneck scramble as even Turkish mountain-track had never before afforded me', confirmed that 'the Mahometan system' was not professed 'over-zealously' by the local population.¹³⁶

Crypto-Christianity in Karadere and attempts at reverting to Christianity

Genuine crypto-Christianity may have been more vigorous in Karadere than in Hemshin by the mid-nineteenth century, not only because conversion was more recent in the former, but also because of the abrupt and violent conditions under which it had taken place. The overwhelming majority of Karadere Armenians were refugees who had fled religious persecution in Hamshen only to be forced to accept the Muslim faith under much duress. As such, they were more likely to have secretly retained loyalty to Christianity, and conversely to have despised Islam. It may also be that more accounts of crypto-Christian behaviour – some perhaps apocryphal – are available on Karadere (Sürmene) than on Hemshin simply because the former area, located in the vicinity of Trebizond, was more accessible to Armenians up until the First World War. Moreover, geographical proximity with Armenian communities around Trebizond – which shared the same Hamshenite origins – may have helped the Islamicized Armenians of Karadere to maintain elements of crypto-Christianity and the Armenian language. Bzhshkian mentions that at the time of his passage in 1817, the converted Armenians of Karadere still carried Armenian last names and spoke Armenian; old people knew Christianity, worshipped the Cross and offered alms (*oghormut iwn*).¹³⁷ A particularly active role was played by the descendants of the martyred priest Tēr Karapet of Toroslu. Starting with his son, who was anointed as a priest, members of the family provided until 1820 a line of priests – all of whom were named Karapet after their ancestor – who secretly visited the converted Armenians of Karadere and catered to their spiritual needs. After a hiatus of twenty years, this missionary activity was resumed in 1840 by a new priest, also named Tēr Karapet, but from another family (Tavlashian), to whom was also entrusted the care of the remaining twenty-five to thirty openly Christian families of Karadere.¹³⁸

Haykuni describes various expressions of attachment to Christianity, mostly on the part of elderly women, in Islamicized villages of Karadere. Feelings of sorrow at having been forced to renounce their former faith often come out in these poignant testimonies, which cannot help but touch whoever reads them, independently of religious affiliation. Thus Haykuni, having asked an elderly woman why they had become 'Turkified', i.e. Islamicized, received the answer that 'Jesus-Christ, I would die for the Armenian faith, in what days are we forced to live

now!’ Similarly, Tēr Karapet Tavlashian, who befriended the lords (*beys*) of Hamshen – or rather Karadere, given the frequent confusion of the two regions by Haykuni – was told by the ‘great bey’ that ‘Turkishness [Islam] is not mine. What can we do? We are Turkified [Islamicized] now; we have fallen in the fire of God’. In addition, until the early 1860s, Islamicized women from Karadere reportedly ‘took their children to Trebizond to be raised as Armenians and told their husbands that the children had drowned or been taken away by wild animals’.¹³⁹

As in Hemshin, some of the Christian traditions and artefacts kept by Karadere converts may have belonged more properly to Dawkins’ ‘imperfectly converted’ or ‘religiously indifferent’ categories rather than to genuine crypto-Christianity. In Tsimlakova (Cimla or Zimla Kava, now Yüceyurt, in the Araklı county), a mullah told Tēr Karapet Tavlashian that his family, descended from a priest, was known as Keshishoghli (i.e. sons of the priest). The family had also kept all the sacerdotal clothing of their ancestor, refusing to sell them to Armenian and European travellers out of fear of bringing bad luck to their household. That conversion did not appear to have prevented religious vocation from running high in certain families is shown in another story, in which a young mullah told Tēr Karapet that his great-grandfather was an Armenian priest, and that women still spoke Armenian in their home.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, most accounts reported the particular emphasis placed by elderly women on chrism as a symbol of their attachment to Christianity.¹⁴¹

Yet it was neither declarations, however touching, nor the application of chrism to the face of children that most convincingly proved the attachment of many converted Karadere Armenians to their former faith. The sincerity of these feelings was perhaps better authenticated by attempts to revert to Christianity when the opportunity arose. Efforts to revert to Christianity increased during the 1840s and 1850s after the promulgation of the *Gülhane* edict by Sultan Abdülmecid (1839–1861) in 1839, which inaugurated an era of reforms (*Tanzimat*) in the Ottoman Empire, among which was included freedom of religion. The most serious attempt took place following the promulgation of the *Hatt-i Hümayun* decree by Abdülmecid in February 1856, which reconfirmed in even stronger terms the religious equality between Muslims and non-Muslims proclaimed sixteen years earlier. When three high-ranking officials came from Istanbul to Sürmene, Islamicized Armenians informed the local agha, a member of the Suiçmezoğlu family, of their intention to revert to the church of their ancestors, and asked for his authorization and help in dealing with the commission from Istanbul. Suiçmezoğlu promised his support and asked converted Armenians to prepare a list of those willing to return to Christianity. Mullahs from Of, however, reluctant to see apostasy happen, foiled the attempt by maliciously asking permission to revert to Christianity themselves, since they were descendants of converts to Islam from Greek-Orthodoxy. Given the risk of scandal that the apostasy of Muslim clerics would incur, officials from Istanbul chose promptly to leave the area, promising to return at some other time. According to Tēr Vahan Khoyian, who would later succeed Tēr Karapet Tavlashian as the pastor of Karadere Armenians and who provided these details, ‘the population of Karadere understood too late the machination it was made a victim of’.¹⁴² Nevertheless, some Islamicized families in Karadere reportedly managed to revert to Christianity around 1858.¹⁴³

In addition, another group of families reverted to Christianity some ten years later, in 1869.¹⁴⁴ This last event did not actually take place in Karadere, but in the Yomra district, located further west. The Islamicized Armenians established there could be referred to as ‘converts of the third wave’, since they had escaped persecution first in Hemshin, then in Karadere, only to be forced to become Muslims in their new settlements in Yomra or Platana (Akçaabat). As more recent converts, they were indeed likely candidates to desire to take advantage of the newly offered freedom of religion. Palgrave reported in a letter sent in April 1869 to his superior in Istanbul, British Ambassador Sir Henry Elliot, that some fifty families from the village of ‘Kaleefa’, i.e. Kalafka (now K  m  rc  , in the Yomra county; see Map 7.3), had ‘declared themselves “Armenian” Christians’. In a petition addressed to the foreign consuls in Trebizond, these families had stated that ‘although for four centuries they have professed Islam, they have always been Christian at heart’. The mention of 400 years may have been added by Palgrave himself, or was a misconception by the petitioners, since the Islamicization of these families was clearly more recent. Palgrave was also informed that, should these families obtain their wish, some 2,000 more families would follow suit.¹⁴⁵ It should be noted here that even though the 1869 attempt to revert to Christianity did not directly concern Karadere, the mention in the petition of 2,000 additional families wanting to apostatize from Islam is a clear reference to the Karadere region, since Yomra and Platana certainly did not contain such a large number of Islamicized families. In addition, many of the families that did manage to revert to Christianity from the late 1850s on, fearing reprisals for having apostatized, found it safer to move to other villages, such as Apion (Abyon, now Reşadiye, in Yomra) and Samera (or Samaruksa, now the villages of Yeşilyurt and İkişu, in Yomra), where they were known as *tenesur* (*tanassur* in Turkish), or apostates.¹⁴⁶

Palgrave, who had little sympathy for converts – despite having himself converted many times during his lifetime – had argued that the conversion to Christianity of the Islamicized Armenians, like that of the Islamicized Greeks of Kromni, was not motivated by worthy spiritual aims, but was driven primarily by the lowly desire to obtain exemption from military service.¹⁴⁷ Yet such wishes of avoiding conscription were dashed, since official acceptance of the new status of these families as Christians was not extended to military obligations. The Islamicized Armenians who reverted to Christianity continued to be conscripted as before in the army. As a result, a new migration took place, this time to the Russian shores of the Black Sea.¹⁴⁸

Language

An unintended consequence of the desire of the Islamicized population of Karadere to revert to Christianity was, ultimately, the loss of the Armenian language. Local authorities – either at the sancak level in Trebizond, at the kaza level in Of, or at the more subaltern nahiye level in S  rmene – proceeded to the adoption of urgent measures to stem apostasy from Islam. Turkish schools were opened in the district, where Muslim preachers, particularly from Of, were also

dispatched. According to both T‘umayian and Haykuni, a campaign was launched against the use of the Armenian language. Speaking Armenian was declared a sin by mullahs who stated that ‘seven Armenian words were an insult for a Muslim’.¹⁴⁹

This campaign was ultimately successful, since within a few generations Armenian had almost died out in Karadere, and by the early twentieth century it was only spoken by elderly people.¹⁵⁰ T‘umayian’s statement, written in 1870, that Islamicized Armenians would preserve their language, ‘since Mohammedan Greeks and Georgians had managed to do so’, appeared in retrospect to be overly optimistic.¹⁵¹ The decline was already perceptible in the late 1870s. Haykuni, noticing differences in the practice of the Armenian language from one village to another, wrote that Armenian was more widely used in T‘rëts‘or (Tsimla/Zimla), thus implying that it was spoken less elsewhere.¹⁵²

The circumstances of the disappearance of Armenian in Hemshin are largely unknown. In the 1830s, according to Protestant missionaries Smith and Dwight, the Hemshinli spoke Armenian, and ‘many of their women know no other language’.¹⁵³ A few decades later, the situation had changed considerably. Cuinet’s statement that the inhabitants of Hemshin ‘bien que pratiquant la religion musulmane, parlent la langue arménienne’, was probably outdated, as the use of Armenian had declined greatly by 1890.¹⁵⁴ A 1893 article in *Nor-Dar* admitted to this fact by noting that ‘they have not yet forgotten the mother language, and if they often speak Turkish, it is because of their fear of government; but, in spite of all, many know and speak Armenian’.¹⁵⁵ By the early twentieth century, Armenian had almost disappeared from Hemshin. According to A. P. Meghavorian, who wrote in 1904, one would occasionally meet elderly people speaking Armenian. The situation was the same among the few dozen families from Hemshin who had moved to the Akçakoca district in northwestern Anatolia, as only the elderly could still speak Armenian. The eminent linguist Nikolai Marr, in his 1910 article on Turkish Lazistan, stated that ‘the Hemshin who border the Laz to the south are Armenian Muslims. They have not only changed their faith, but to a great extent have completely forgotten their native language’.¹⁵⁶

Was government pressure, as indicated in Armenian sources, indeed the cause of the decline of Armenian in Hemshin and Karadere? In the conservative milieu of the Pontos, religious and secular authorities generally did not share the liberal ideas coming from Istanbul. Not only did they not display any zeal in implementing the new reforms, but often they did their best to obstruct them. The appearance of people wishing to renounce Islam for Christianity was certainly not a development that local Muslims would have welcomed at any time. A contemporary of the events and author of a history of Trebizond, Şakir Şevket, describes his shock at seeing some of his former schoolmates, with whom he had prayed in mosques, convert to Greek-Orthodoxy and change their names from Ahmet and Hasan to Nikola and Yorgi.¹⁵⁷ Coming less than three decades after the Greek insurgency and the 1828–29 Russo-Turkish War and on the heels of the Crimean War, which again pitted the Ottomans against Orthodox Russians, this new phenomenon raised serious concerns and was probably deemed unacceptable among many within the local élites, even if the pasha of Trebizond and a few officials

pretended to put a brave face on it.¹⁵⁸ Consequently, it would not be too far-fetched to imagine that certain measures, including an increase in Islamic religious instruction and the forbidding of the Armenian language, were taken in Trebizond – or at a more subaltern level in Sürmene or Rize – to curtail the movement among Armenian-speaking Muslims.

Yet persecution by state authorities was probably not the exclusive cause of the disappearance of the Armenian language from Karadere and Hemshin. Other factors were probably also at play, some having their roots in the older religious structure of Ottoman society, and some in the new social and economic developments affecting this society, in the Pontos and the rest of the empire.

In the pre-national context of the Ottoman Empire, people identified themselves in terms of their membership in a particular religious community, or *millet*. Thus being ‘Armenian’ prior to the import of the European idea of nation to the Ottoman Empire meant belonging to the Armenian Apostolic Church and the millet it comprised. Leaving the Armenian Church to join another Christian denomination or Islam also meant that one stopped being part of the Armenian ‘nation’. Koch, told by his guides in the Kiskim district (now Yusufeli) that he would be taken to a village inhabited by ‘Franks’, wondered along the way how a European colony had settled in such a remote place. Once he arrived in Garmirk‘ (or Garmenik‘, Arm. Karmirk‘), he realized that there were, indeed, no Europeans there; the local population was composed exclusively of Armenians, called *Firengi* due to their Catholic creed. Reflecting on differences in the understanding of the idea of nation, Koch – who came from Germany, where the idea of nation was fermenting – stated that ‘in Asia, peoples [*völker* in the text] are more frequently differentiated by religion than by descent’.¹⁵⁹ Thus ‘Armenian’ was used interchangeably with ‘Christian’, and ‘Turk’ with ‘Muslim’ – and continues to be done so to this day by most of Turkey’s rural population. That one could possibly be a ‘Christian Turk’ or an ‘Armenian Muslim’ was a concept beyond the grasp of most of the Ottoman Empire’s inhabitants, an anomaly.

The amalgamation of nation and religion was sometimes extended to language: Bryer was once told by a local peasant that some villages in his region spoke ‘Christian’.¹⁶⁰ Even though certain languages were thus associated with certain religions, there was in theory no legal or religious obstacle for members of any millet to speak any language. There were frequent cases all over Asia Minor of Armenians speaking Turkish – or Kurdish for that matter – as their first or even as their only language. Since Turkish was the medium of communication among the peoples of the empire, it was a logical development that Armenians or members of other minority communities chose to adopt it. The reverse case, in which members of the dominant Muslim millet spoke a language identified with the *gāvur* (giaour, i.e. infidels), was a much rarer occurrence, and constituted a paradox, if not a sin. Thus Muslims of the Artvin region who spoke ‘Georgian-Christian’ confessed to Koch that they were aware of committing a sin by using in the homes of believers ‘a language of giaours which, however, they had received from God with their mother’s milk’. Yet their hopes of going to Paradise were not lost, since they knew ‘the holy Turkish language’, and hence ‘God and the angels would be

understanding'.¹⁶¹ Similarly, the agha of Atina (Pazar) told the German linguist Georg Rosen that speaking Laz was comparable for him to committing a sin.¹⁶² By dropping Armenian for Turkish, the Islamicized Armenians of Hemshin and Karadere had put an end to what amounted at the very least to a paradoxical situation and was often held as a sin. They had also completed, in the words of Bryer, religious conversion with 'social conversion' and achieved their transition from the Armenian millet to the Muslim one.¹⁶³

In addition, the Pontos had entered a new era during the 1840s, marked by the submission of the derebeys and the reassertion of central power. This new era offered opportunities for social and economic mobility that may have contributed to the abandonment of the Armenian language. The careers of Mehmed Ali Pasha – who became Grand-Admiral, Grand-Vizier, and married a daughter of the Sultan – and of numerous ulemas epitomize the advancement of Hemshinli in Muslim Ottoman society, or as Michael Meeker calls it, 'the imperial system'.¹⁶⁴ The correlation between social status and loss of language was visible as well among the Lazi during the second half of the nineteenth century, since it was often men of influence and wealth who expressed to European travellers contempt for their native language.¹⁶⁵ Even the Hemshinli who did not accomplish prestigious careers may have felt it necessary to adopt Turkish as a first language in lieu of Armenian. Migrations – as well as military conscription – are likely to have played a central role in the language switch. Driven by economic necessity to larger coastal towns or to Istanbul where they primarily spoke Turkish, Hemshinli men may have continued to do so after returning to their villages. The fate of Armenian in Karadere and Hemshin may have been similar to that of another regional language, Breton. The loss of the latter is believed to have been caused to a larger extent by soldiers who continued to speak the French they had grown accustomed to in the trenches of the First World War after returning home to Brittany than by the mandatory education of children in French, introduced a few decades earlier.¹⁶⁶

The weakness of the rationale linked to economic and social mobility, however, is its failure to explain why, placed in similar conditions, various Georgian, Lazi (*Lazuri*) and Greek-speaking Muslim communities managed to cling to their ancestral languages, while the Hemshinli and others abandoned them.¹⁶⁷ In addition, language is primarily transmitted by mothers, not by fathers, and the migration factor does not explain how Hemshinli women, who did not attend school and remained in their home villages, came to stop speaking Armenian. The answer to these questions may be that the Armenian language in Hemshin went underground rather than disappeared. Writing on the Islamicized Armenians of the Çoruh Basin, in Olt'ı (Oltu) and elsewhere, Atrpet complained that they had lost their language, while the Islamicized Georgians of Ajaria had managed to preserve theirs. Yet he noticed that while these villagers had lost Armenian for Turkish, 'their tone, pronunciation, declamation and phrase structure were those of Armenian, and even in their spoken dialect many Armenian words continued to be used'.¹⁶⁸ The same happened in Hemshin, as the local Turkish dialect replacing Armenian contained numerous Armenian loanwords.¹⁶⁹ The importance of these loanwords, often used in emotionally attached activities, has led

Wolfgang Feurstein to write that the linguistic context in Hemshin would be more correctly described as a transfer of essentially Armenian elements into a new medium, the Turkish language, rather than as a displacement of Armenian.¹⁷⁰

In addition to loanwords, Hemshin families continued, until the adoption of a law reforming names in 1934, to carry Armenian surnames, such as Apeloğlu, Arakeloğlu, Avedikoğlu, Kirkoroğlu or Matoslar.¹⁷¹ Armenian first names were reported to be in use among Hemshinli women during the 1890s.¹⁷² Moreover, in another astonishing development, the Armenian dialect of Hamshen, or *Homshetsma*, continued to be spoken by one Muslim community, namely the Hemshinli who had settled in the region of Hopa, to the east of Hemshin.

Hopa Hemshin

The date of the migration of the Hemshinli to the districts of Hopa (Khopa, central district) and Makrial or Makriali (the present-day Kemalpaşa district of the Hopa county), to the east of Hemshin, remains unknown (see Map 7.1). According to T'orlak'yan, who estimates that 10 to 15 per cent of the total population of Hemshin moved to Hopa, the migration took place during the second half of the seventeenth century. The same approximate date is given by Minas Gasapian.¹⁷³ Russian sources indicate a later date of settlement, around 1780 for N. N. Levashov, and the early nineteenth century for E. K. Liuzen. The latter was told in 1905 by an elderly Hemshinli woman that her ancestors had come to the Makrial district a century before.¹⁷⁴

A second and more perplexing issue is whether these people were already converted to Islam or still Christians at the time of their settlement in Hopa. Both written sources and the oral accounts of the Hopa Hemshin – who call themselves *Homshetsik* – fail to provide any answer to this question. Oral tradition only indicates that one of the two constitutive groups of the Hopa Hemshinli, the *Turtsevantsi* (probably from the western Armenian *trsets'i*, meaning outsider) converted to Islam much earlier than the other group, the *Ardelets'i* (from the village of Ardala, now Eşmekaya, in the Hopa county). This earlier conversion period would also explain why the Turtsevantsi believe themselves to be less fluent in their Armenian dialect, *Homshetsma*, than the Ardelets'i.¹⁷⁵

A study published recently in Turkey advances a radically new hypothesis on the question of the date of the migration to Hopa and the period of conversion of the Hopa Hemshinli. According to the author, Ali Gündüz, the migration took place in the early sixteenth century, during the reign of Ottoman Sultan Selim I. The Hemshinli, who were then still Christians, were settled as timariots (fief holders) in this borderland district to defend it against 'Georgian and Abaza pirates'. Conversion would have taken place some 200 years later, at the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹⁷⁶ However, aside from the author's failure to provide any proof to substantiate his claims, this theory, although interesting, presents a few problems. The first is that, with the exception of a small hamlet – now disappeared – called Little Hemshin, there are no Armenian toponyms in Hopa and Makrial, but only Lazi and Turkish ones, which would tend to indicate a relatively recent date of migration.¹⁷⁷ The second is that unlike their Laz, and

particularly Ajar neighbours – whose warlike character was widely reported – little is known about any military tradition among the Hopa Hemshinli. Had Hemshinli timariots existed in Hopa they would have probably evolved, like timar holders elsewhere in the Pontos, into derebeys towards the end of the seventeenth century, following the breakdown of central administration. Yet Hemshin derebeys or aghas are unheard of in Hopa, where Hemshin appeared to have been relatively poor and not to have owned much land. In an early twentieth century article on the region, they are described as tilling fields belonging to the Laz.¹⁷⁸

It was not for being wealthy landowners, but for their activity as pastoralists and their practice of transhumance, that Hopa Hemshinli were mostly known in nineteenth-century reports by Russian and other European travellers. In the summer, they took their flocks to *yaylas* located in the Şavşet area, relatively far from their villages. The men dressed like Ajars, with turbans wrapped around their heads, while women dressed similarly to Kurds. According to Liuzen, they were taken for Kurds throughout the entire Artvin region because of their way of life, and people were surprised to learn that they spoke Armenian.¹⁷⁹ To add further confusion to the matter, there was a small group in the Hopa region known as Kurdo-Hemshin, which in spite of its name was neither Armenian nor Kurdish speaking, but Turkish speaking.¹⁸⁰ According to an article published in 1888, the Hopa Hemshin numbered 600 households, divided between 423 families in Turkey and 177 in Russia – compared to a figure of around 2,200 households for the traditional, or Bash Hemshin area.¹⁸¹

It is likely that this marginal existence as pastoralists allowed for the survival of the Armenian language in the Hopa/Makrial region. The Hopa Hemshinli were too unimportant to be a cause of worry, and they were certainly not worth the same type of government pressure – involving the opening of Turkish schools and missionary activity by mullahs – that contributed to the abandonment of Armenian in Karadere. In addition, provincial secular and religious authorities, as Russian officials in later times, may simply not have been aware of or even have suspected that this small Muslim community, which some believed to be Kurdish, was actually Armenian speaking. A second possible reason for the preservation of the Armenian language lies in the absence of economically induced migrations among the Hopa Hemshinli, who did not share the economic mobility of their compatriots in Bash Hemshin (i.e. Hemshin proper, to distinguish the original Hemshin district from Hopa Hemshin).¹⁸² The Hopa Hemshinli also did not participate in the sometimes spectacular social ascent enjoyed by the Bash Hemshinli beginning in the 1850s or even earlier. Less integrated into the ‘imperial system’ as it developed in nineteenth-century Pontos, the Hopa Hemshinli had consequently fewer incentives to abandon their mother tongue.

Political and economic developments in Bash Hemshin

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Hemshin was still a kaza of the Gönye (or Günye) sancak, to which it had been attached in 1566.¹⁸³ In centuries to come, the administrative rank of Hemshin would vary, as it would often be demoted to the

level of a *nahiye* or, more exceptionally, be promoted to that of a *sancak*. Its political destiny, however, would remain linked to that of the coastal region to its north, rather than to areas located to the south of the Pontic Mountains. As with the other districts of the Pontos, Hemshin would be ruled by *derebey*s following the breakdown of Ottoman administration towards the end of the seventeenth century.

The first mention in a written source of a Hemshin *derebey* comes from a 1788 list of *ayân* (landed gentry, notables) of the Trebizond province who were summoned with their levies to reinforce the fortress of Anapa in a campaign against Russians. Sıçan Hacı Hüseyin of Hemshin is reported to have responded to the call with a contingent of one hundred men, out of a total of 3,500 gathered in total for the region between Vakfikebir in the west to Hopa in the east (i.e. the modern-day provinces of Trabzon and Rize along with the coastal sections of Artvin).¹⁸⁴ A second mention of *derebey*s in Hemshin is made by Inchichian, who says that ‘the lordship of the country was in the hands of two aghas, one of whom was of Armenian ancestry’.¹⁸⁵ A valley lord of Armenian background was quite exceptional, since *derebey* families were generally believed to have been of Turkic or Laz origins rather than Greek or Armenian.¹⁸⁶ The presence of a *derebey* of Armenian descent reinforces the hypothesis that the desire to maintain a dominant position in their valleys and not to allow newcomers to supplant them must have constituted one of the primary motives of conversion among many leading Hamshen Armenians.

Inchichian was either not aware of the presence of other *derebey*s, or the number of *derebey*s increased over the next few decades, for Koch mentioned the presence of four valley lords in Hemshin, then a *sancak*, at the time of his visit in early 1840s. Below the paramount chief, who carried the title of *voyvod* and dominated the largest section of Hemshin, composed of valleys of the Fırtına and all its tributaries, stood three *derebey*s, with the title of *ayân*, who controlled the smaller valleys of the *sancak*. Thus a pattern almost identical to that of the medieval principality of Hamshen, with its prince or ‘baron of barons’ and his subaltern lords, was reproduced. The first of the *derebey*s of Hemshin resided in Cimil (now Başköy, in the İkizdere county), the second in Ortaköy (in all likelihood Mesahor, now Kaptanpaşa, in the same name district of Çayeli) in the valley of the Senoz Dere, and the third in Marmanat (or Melmanat, now Akbucak in Pazar), while the *voyvod* resided in Kale (now Hisarcık, in Çamlıhemşin) during the winter and in the village ‘Hemşin’ (i.e. one of the three villages known as Lower, Middle and Upper Hemşin) during the warm season (see Map 2.1 and Plate 6.1).¹⁸⁷

Aside from Inchichian’s indication that one of the aghas of Hemshin came from an Armenian background – and conversely, that the other was of non-Armenian origin – there is little or no information on the *derebey*s’ families. It would be tempting to imagine a genealogical connection between the earlier families of ‘barons’ of Hamshen and the later *derebey* families who were of Armenian origin. Thus Koch wondered whether one *derebey*, Süleyman Agha Kumbasaroğlu, was not the descendent of Prince Hamam Amatuni.¹⁸⁸ Yet any such conclusion would be purely speculative given the complete silence of sources on this topic. Equally speculative is Mehmet Bilgin’s undocumented claim, probably created to serve the author’s nationalist agenda, that the same Kumbasaroğlu was a descendant of

Kubasar, a Kipchak Turk (Cuman) general who served at the court of the Georgian kings in the twelfth century.¹⁸⁹ Had the Kumbasaroğlus been newcomers, they would have arrived in Hemshin at the earliest during the time of Ottoman conquest, and not in the twelfth or thirteenth century. Furthermore, the issue of their ethnic origins, and that of all derebey families descending from Muslim settlers, would still not be solved; since derebey families descended in all likelihood from timar holders or other officials appointed to Hemshin, and in some cases from adventurers, these families may have hailed from virtually any part of the vast expanses dominated by the Ottoman Empire, and even beyond. While some families were certainly of Turkish background – and the Kumbasaroğlus may indeed have been so – others could have had Balkanic, Laz, Georgian or Kurdish roots.¹⁹⁰

The immigration of Muslims, mostly Ottoman officials, soldiers, timar holders or derebeys, did probably play a role, albeit a minor one, since only a few dozen families were involved at most in the process of Islamicization and linguistic Turkification of Hemshin. A certain number of the civilian and military functionaries appointed to Hemshin must have chosen to remain there. Thus the descendants of Ali Koruk, the military commander (*serasker*) of Hemshin in the 1520s, remained in the region, later adopting the last name Doruk. The names of other officials buried in the district are also available.¹⁹¹ The likelihood of officials choosing to stay in the region may have increased in cases where they married local Hemshinli girls. According to a local story, the Hemshinli are the descendants of a Turkish pasha married to an Armenian woman. This legend may not only be a metaphor representing the combination of Armenian and Turkish elements in Hemshin culture, but it may also be a direct reference to the mixed marriages which took between Ottoman officials and Hemshinli women. In this story, though, the Pasha ultimately abandoned his wife and children when his duty in the region ended.¹⁹² Migrants may have contributed to the Islamicization and Turkification of Hemshin, yet assimilation worked to a much larger extent in the reverse direction, provoking the ‘Hemshinization’ of the settlers. The latter, who constituted only a tiny minority, became so integrated into the surrounding culture as to become indistinguishable from other Hemshinli within a few generations.

While receiving – and assimilating – Ottoman officials, Hemshin contributed its own share to the empire by producing an impressive number of high-ranking Islamic clerics, civil servants and military leaders for a canton of its size. The ascent in the Ottoman religious and secular hierarchy of individuals known as ‘Hemshinli’ – a reminder of Armenian religious scholars with the epithet ‘Hamshēnts‘i’ of medieval times – is generally linked to the social and economic changes affecting the Pontos in the second half of the nineteenth century. The achievement of prestigious careers by many Hemshinli migrants demonstrates the extent to which Hemshin opened up to the rest of the empire and the high level of integration into Muslim Ottoman society it achieved in ensuing years. The social advancement of the Hemshinli, however, may have started earlier than the mid-nineteenth century, since Grand-Admiral and Grand-Vizier Mehmed Ali Pasha and the multitude of Hemshinli ulemas had two eighteenth-century predecessors. The first was one Hemshin Pasha, who after having been in charge of the *eyalet* (province) of

Karaman, was appointed governor of the Diyarbekir province on 11 August 1739.¹⁹³ The second was Abdullah Efendi, a scholar versed in Arabic language works of science, who died in Istanbul in 1776 and thus could possibly claim the title of first Hemshinli ulema.¹⁹⁴ While information is available on Abdullah Efendi and his studies, complete mystery surrounds Hemshin Pasha. It is highly probable that he was called so after his birthplace, yet it is possible that he was not of Hemshinli origin and received this name only after serving in Hemshin for a while.

Outmigration in the second half of the nineteenth century was not only motivated by the superior opportunities offered to ambitious young Hemshinli by large urban centres such as Erzurum and Istanbul. It was also linked to a decline in the economy of the rural areas of the Pontos in the aftermath of the last derebey revolts, which may have induced even those with little or no ambition to leave their native district. Bryer cites the devastation caused by government troops crushing derebey revolts and the ensuing loss of regional autonomy as the starting point of mass migration from Lazistan.¹⁹⁵ The same phenomenon applied in Hemshin, which also suffered from natural conditions – rugged relief and a concomitant lack of arable land – less favourable than those of neighbouring Lazistan. Bzhshkian mentioned the poverty of Hamshen, which had pushed many of its inhabitants in previous centuries to move to Trebizond.¹⁹⁶ Yet the poverty described by Bzhshkian was at least partly a consequence of excessive taxation of Christians and of their oppression by derebeys. Once past the initial exactions that led ultimately to the disappearance of Christians, and aside from the occasional havoc brought by infighting, the period of rule of the derebeys between the end of the seventeenth century and the late 1830s was probably not a very difficult time overall for the Muslim population of Hemshin.

In Hemshin and elsewhere, moreover, the era of derebeys appeared in retrospect relatively benign in view of the period which succeeded it. Thus T'umayian, who wrote in 1870, considered the situation of the rural population of the Pontos to have been much better and more secure some twenty or thirty years earlier (i.e. in 1840 or 1850), despite the exactions committed by the derebeys, as government taxes were much lower then. According to him, poverty was pushing many, independently of religious affiliation or ethnicity, to envisage leaving their homeland.¹⁹⁷ Similarly, valley lords and their regime were assessed in positive terms by several European witnesses who had the opportunity to visit the area. Koch attributed the higher prosperity and the more developed transport and housing infrastructure of Pertakrag, Hemshin and especially Lazistan, when compared to the rest of the Orient, to the presence of the derebeys and to the total absence of other Ottoman officials.¹⁹⁸ *Déré-Begs* had a fervent supporter in Palgrave, who rarely missed an opportunity to express his regret of their suppression and his fervent dislike of the functionaries appointed by the central government who replaced them. Palgrave argued somewhat pertinently that derebeys had an interest in the prosperity of the region they lived in, while the corrupt functionaries who succeeded them had little or no concern for the welfare of areas in which they were posted for a limited amount of time. In addition, Palgrave continued, the derebeys spent locally what they took, even if sometimes abusively, from the inhabitants of districts under their control, while most of the taxes collected locally were sent to Istanbul following the re-establishment of central rule.¹⁹⁹

A quick look at the Trabzon yearbooks (*salnames*) shows the frequent change in the officials in charge of administering the Hemshin nahiye during the 1870s. The officials (*müdür*, i.e. director) placed at the head of a nahiye served at most one year between 1870 and 1881, with only two exceptions, Mecid Efendi and Hüseyin Hüsnî Efendi, who managed to keep their position for a period of between one and two years. Only the secretary (*katib*) of the district, one Halid Efendi, retained his position between 1870 and 1878.²⁰⁰ The *salnames*, unfortunately, do not tell us much about the economy of Hemshin during that period. A single short paragraph, repeated for each year of the 1870 to 1881 period, listed as locally manufactured export products thread used to make fish and anchovy (*hamsi*) nets, linen similar to Rize cloth, woollen socks and a woollen cloth known as *zekve* and used to make for trousers (*şalvar*). Another export of the region to Istanbul was wood from walnut tree and alder. The 1878 volume, which provided cattle figures for the Hemshin nahiye, and the 1879 volume, with figures on agricultural production, were exceptions. Thus the Hemshin nahiye counted some 257 horses, 434 oxen, 4,335 cows, 1,770 goats and 1,893 sheep in 1878; it produced 275 *keyl* (bushels) of wheat, 39,090 of maize, 4,930 of beans and 2,460 of barley, as well as 3,195 *kıyye* (a measure equivalent to 128 kilograms) of hemp, 29,780 of squash, 56,505 of hay and 89,490 of various fruits in 1879.²⁰¹

Palgrave, in his extensive report on the region between the Russian border and Trebizond, gave a more comprehensive description of the timber production and of other aspects of Hemshin's economy and trade during the early 1870s. According to the report, in addition to its beech, pine and fir forests, Hemshin was also endowed with many acres of very fine boxwood bushes. The wood was mostly exported through an English company, Gardiner & Co, which had offices in Poti, in Russia. According to Palgrave, the growth of the industry was threatened by the unskillfulness of 'peasant cutters'. The timber industry was also hindered by the authorities, who eventually realized that the export of boxwood was very profitable, and began to tax it so heavily as to provoke a fall in exports. Honey and beeswax continued, as in past centuries, to be high on the list of items produced in the district, but their combined value was much less than that of maize. The open spaces above the tree line were occupied by fields of rye and barley, and especially by mountain pastures known as *yaylas*. Sheep rearing, however, was affected by disease and by 'an injudicious augmentation of the sheep-tax levied by government'. Indeed Hemshin, with its rich pastures, could have sustained more than the 1,893 sheep and 1,770 goats indicated in the 1878 *salname* – unless farmers had purposely undercounted their livestock to evade taxes. The statistics provided in Palgrave's report also showed that the total amount of taxes paid by Hemshin was much higher than the value of its exports; hence the district's increasing poverty.²⁰²

Palgrave also provided some statistics on the Hemsin district, with numbers taken mostly from Ottoman statistics of the period. Hemshin had thirty villages and 13,190 inhabitants, divided into 1,584 households, of which twenty-three were Armenian, and the rest, 1,561 families, Muslim. He commented on the Armenian origins of the overwhelmingly Muslim population of the district and their conversion, which he believed to have started 150 years previously (i.e. around 1720), and which, he noted, was still continuing. The most interesting,

however, was yet to come since, despite his sympathy for their tax burden and suffering at the hands of venal officials, the Hemshinli were not spared Palgrave's notoriously prejudiced comments. According to him,

Both Mahometans and Christians are considered, and rightly, as the most uncivilized, indeed savage, natives of this part of the Empire; neither in type nor character have they anything in common with the Laz population around. But they are no less averse to Turkish rule than the Laz themselves and it is very seldom that an Ottoman official ventures among them. To myself however, as a stranger, the Mahometans of Hamsheen were very hospitable and friendly after their manner.²⁰³

The Russian translation of Palgrave's report, which appeared in 1882, also mentioned that the Hemshin were known as bear hunters and were usually armed. This characterization of the Hemshinli as the most uncivilized people of the region was taken at face value by I. I. Stebnitskii, who quoted Palgrave as his source. In addition to being boors and savages, the Hemshin also had a reputation of being robbers. In an 1874 article on Lazistan, Osman Bey (Frederick Millingen) wrote that the paths of the mountains of Cimil and Hemshin were dangerous because of robbers hiding in them. Dimitri Bakradze also concurred that the 'Kurdo-Hemshin' (i.e. a term that could apply to all Hopa Hemshinli or to their Kurdo-Hemshin subdivision *stricto sensu*) were a plague to the Batum region and that their appearance was accompanied by constant theft and robbery. Harut'iwn Gat'ēnian wrote that the Hopa Hemshin attacked and robbed Armenians on the roads prior to the Russian occupation in 1878.²⁰⁴ Similarly, bandits from Hemshin were a scourge to their Armenian neighbours of Khodorchur. Yet it may be wondered to what extent this reputation was deserved. The robbers mentioned by Osman Bey were not necessarily of Hemshin background, even if they hid in the mountains of the district. Moreover, one author, Meghavorian, offered a quite different opinion of the Hemshinli, describing them as a peaceful lot, carrying at most a pocket-knife, while their quarrelsome Ajar neighbours were always armed.²⁰⁵

Two other items about Hemshin were cited by both Palgrave and the Trabzon yearbooks. The first of these items were the castles of Hemshin, Kale-i Bâlâ and Zîr, which Palgrave believed to be of Georgian construction. The second item was the hot spring at Arder (later called Ayder), the waters of which, according to Palgrave, 'are copious and seem to contain carbonate of soda'. The salnames mentioned its 'proven' therapeutic effects against rheumatism and its 'unique flavour unmatched by any other mineral water'. The salnames also provided another small piece of information, that small boats could sometimes borrow the Firtina Dere.²⁰⁶

The 1878 War, Russian occupation and migrations

The most marked political development in the Pontos, after the crushing of the derebeys and the reassertion of central power during the 1830s and 1840s, was the Russo-Turkish War in 1877–78. The material damage caused by the conflict, as

well as the climate of demoralization and the economic downturn which followed the war, set in movement a train of migration to the Kocaeli and Bolu sancaks of northwestern Anatolia (see Map 7.4). This migration affected Muslim and Christian communities alike. The Hopa Hemshinli were more affected by migration than were the Bash Hemshinli, since the areas inhabited by them were directly affected by war operations and were partly annexed to Russia following the end of the conflict. It is possible that a similar migration, probably on a much lesser scale, had already taken place following the Crimean War some twenty years earlier, leading to the settlement of Hopa Hemshinli around Hendeğ (now Hendek county, in the province of Sakarya).²⁰⁷ In addition, Hamshen Armenians had started to move to the area prior to the war, as a group from Ordu had founded the village of Aram Giwgh (or Kızılcık) in 1873.²⁰⁸ Even though Hemshin proper was not touched directly by the war, a few of its inhabitants took part in the migration as well, settling in what is now the Hemşin village of the Akçakoca county, yet in much lower numbers than the Hopa Hemshinli. The *apōets* 'i (western Armenian *abōets* 'i, or *aboetsi*) appellation by which their Hopa Hemshinli neighbours were described probably indicates that these migrants originated from the Abuhemşin village (now Aslandere in the Fındıklı county of Rize).²⁰⁹

In contrast to this marginal migration towards northwest Anatolia, it is labour migration to Russia that would assume much greater proportions among the Bash Hemshinli in the years following the 1878 War. The Hemshinli may have learned about prospects in Russia from their neighbours to the south, the Armenian Catholics of Khodorchur, who hired Hemshinli guides to reach the sea on their way to Russia, where they had worked as bakers and pastry cooks since the mid-nineteenth century. From Batum to Warsaw and Riga, there were few cities of the Russian Empire that did not have bakeries and pastry shops operated by Hemshinli. Khodorchur Armenians and the Hemshinli were soon joined by the Laz, with whom the Hemshinli set up business ventures, the Hemshinli supplying the capital and the Laz the workforce. With time, the Laz would become independent and compete with their former Hemshinli employers or partners. Marr spoke with irony of the fact that both Hemshin and Laz, while coming from a country that produced little bread, made their fortune on bread in a country to which bread is native.²¹⁰

Some Hemshinli men took Russian or Armenian brides, who were abandoned in some cases and brought to Hemshin in others when their husbands had reached retirement age. With the fortunes made in Russia, the Hemshinli often built magnificent mansions (*konaks*), the exquisite decorations of which included samovars, imperial tableware and even pianos, as a reminder of their sojourn in Russia.²¹¹ The Russian Revolution of 1917 brought this golden era to an abrupt end, forcing most Hemshin to return to Turkey. A few remained in Russia until the complete nationalization of the economy by Stalin from the late 1920s on made the ownership of private businesses impossible; some were unable to return home when borders between the Soviet Union and Turkey were sealed in the late 1930s. With the passage of time, the memory of this labour migration has taken on almost mythical proportions among the Hemshinli. The former Makrevis village has been rebaptized Konaklar after the many mansions it contains. Visitors are not

only informed that the konaks were built with money earned in Russia, but are also reminded that the 'valley lost whole fortunes in the Bolshevik Revolution'.²¹²

Conclusion

From the mid-seventeenth century on, a number of developments would gradually transform Hemshin from an almost entirely Christian-populated district into an overwhelmingly Muslim one. The developments which led to the Islamicization of Hemshin included, in order of appearance, the conversion of their Laz neighbours, fiscal oppression, the rise of Muslim intolerance *vis-à-vis* Christians following a series of Ottoman defeats at the hands of Russia, the breakdown of central authority in the late seventeenth century and the ensuing climate of anarchy when the region was at the mercy of warlords known as derebeys. As a consequence of these factors, part of the population of the old Armenian Hamshen canton converted to Islam, while another part chose to leave its homeland to preserve its Christian faith. Exile, however, was not always sufficient to protect oneself and one's family against forced conversion, as shown in the case of the Hamshen Armenians who settled in the village of Mala or in the Karadere district.

Islam is believed to have progressed from the coast up, with highland villages remaining Christian for a longer time than lowland ones, although there were exceptions to this rule, as in the case of the Hala Dere Valley, Islamicized in its entirety from early on. A necessary implication of the extended period of time needed to achieve Islamicization was that Christians and Muslims co-existed in the region during the duration of this process. The religious context during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was, however, more complicated than that, since the boundary between Christians and Muslims in Hemshin was blurred by the existence of yet a third category composed of crypto-Christians. Thanks to the protection and isolation offered by the mountains, the crypto-Christians of Hemshin were able to attend church, secretly baptise their children, and continue to celebrate various Armenian religious feasts such as Vardavar and Verap'okhum. With time, however, crypto-Christianity diminished, coming to an end in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the last reports of crypto-Christian practices dating to the 1890s. Time may also have affected the meaning of these practices, gradually voiding them of their original religious character and turning them into superstitious rituals. Crypto-Christianity may have been more vigorous in the Karadere Valley, as attested by the attempt of some of the Islamicized Armenians there to revert to Christianity during the 1850s and 1860s.

The Islamicization of Hemshin was completed when the Armenian language fell out of usage and was replaced by Turkish during the second half of the nineteenth century. The abandonment of Armenian has often been explained in terms of pressure by local religious and political officials to put an end to what could have been considered an anomaly (i.e. members of the Muslim community speaking a language associated with a Christian minority group). The increased integration of the Hemshin into Ottoman Muslim society and the spectacular rise of some of the members of the group within the Ottoman Empire's élite may also

have played a significant role in the language switch. This hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that Armenian continued to be spoken by the Hemshinli residing around Hopa who, unlike their kin residing in the traditional Hemshin area, were not able to take advantage of the opportunities for social advancement that were available from the 1840s on in the Pontic region. However, it should be noted that Armenian did not entirely disappear from Hemshin, since the Turkish dialect that developed there contains a large number of Armenian loanwords.

Throughout the centuries, inhabitants of Hemshin have practised migration as a means to escape the poverty of their homeland. The new opportunities for social and economic advancement that appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century could be achieved only through migration to large regional centres such as Trabzon or Erzurum, or to the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul. After the 1877–78 Russo-Turkish War, a new type of migration became popular, this time to Russia, where migrant workers from Hemshin engaged mostly in the bakery business. The Russian Revolution put an end to this enterprise, forcing most Hemshin back to Turkey.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the Hemshin appeared as a community well integrated into the Ottoman ‘imperial system’, able to take advantage of the opportunities it afforded and to propel its sons into membership among the empire’s religious and political élites. The Hemshin had also managed to take advantage of opportunities lying further away, outside of the Ottoman Empire. These achievements, which should by no means be underestimated, are all the more remarkable if one considers that unlike other Armenians who converted to Islam, the Hemshin did not assimilate to the surrounding Muslim groups, but managed to preserve throughout these centuries essential aspects of their old culture, religion and language. This allowed them to develop a unique group identity and distinctiveness that have survived to this day.

Notes

- 1 Eli Smith, *Researches of the Rev. E. Smith and Rev. H.G.O. Dwight in Armenia; including a journey through Asia Minor, and into Georgia and Persia, with a visit to the Nestorian and Chaldean Christians of Oormiah and Salmas*, vol. 2 (Boston, MA: Crocker and Brewster, 1833), pp. 324–25.
- 2 H. Ghukas Vardapet Inchichian, *Ashkharhagrut ‘iwn Ch ‘orits’ Masants’ Ashkharhi: Asioy, Ewropioy, Ap ‘rikoy, ew Amerikoy* [Geography of the Four Parts of the World: Asia, Europe, Africa, and America], part 1, Asia, vol. 1, *Hayastan [Armenia]* (Venice: St Lazarus Monastery, 1806), p. 396; H. Manuël V. K ‘ajuni, *Askharhagrut ‘iwn Hin ew Nor Hayastaneayts’ Dpratants’ Tghayots’ Hamar* [Geography of Ancient and Modern Armenia for Seminary Students] (Venice: Mekhitarist Press, 1857), p. 206.
- 3 P. T ‘umayian, ‘Pontosi Hayerē: Ashkharhagrakan ew K ‘aghak ‘akan Vichak Trapizoni’ [The Armenians of the Pontos: Geographic and Political Situation of Trebizond], *Lumay: Grakan Handēs [Luma: Literary Journal]* (Tiflis, 1899), 4, no. 2, pp. 157 and 175.
- 4 H. Hakovbos V. Tashian, *Tayk’, Drats ‘ik ew Khotorjur: Patmakan-Teghagrakan Usumnasirut ‘iwn* [Tayk, Neighbours and Khotorjur: Historico-Geographical Study], vol. 2 (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1980), p. 129.

- 5 P. Jacobus Vard. Dashian [H. Hakovbos V. Tashian], *La Population arménienne de la région comprise entre la mer Noire et Karin (Erzeroum): Rapide coup d'oeil historique et ethnographique*, translated by Frédéric Macler (Vienna: Imprimerie des Méchitaristes, 1922), p. 29.
- 6 H. Ghewond V. Alishanian, *Teghagir Hayots' Metsats' [Topography of Greater Armenia]* (Venice: St Lazarus Monastery, 1855), p. 39.
- 7 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts, and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 77 and 360 n. 18.
- 8 Tashian (1980), vol. 2, pp. 72–73 and 121; Robert W. Edwards, 'Hamšēn: An Armenian Enclave in the Byzanto-Georgian Pontos. A Survey of Literary and Nonliterary Sources', *Le Muséon* (Louvain, 1988), 101, nos. 3–4, p. 413.
- 9 Abel Vardapet Mkhit'arants', *Vēp Gaght'akanut'ean Hayots' Trapizonu [History of the Armenian Community of Trebizond]* (Istanbul: Masis, 1857), pp. 37–39.
- 10 Speros Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 348–50.
- 11 Long considered to be lost, the map was rediscovered in 1991 in the collections of the University of Bologna. Gabriella Uluhogian, *Un'antica mappa dell'Armenia: Monasteri e santuari dal I al XVII secolo* (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 2000), pp. 109–10. In addition to the monastery in Hamshen, the map also mentioned 'the panoramic Mount where the Apostles of Christ placed the shroud [varshamak in Armenian] which was not with the other clothes, but by itself, folded in a corner of the Sepulchre. No one to this day can climb or enter that mountain, because around it are clouds and snow' (p. 110). On the Armenian and Byzantine tradition about Mount Varshamak (now Verçenik), see Alishanian (1855), p. 39; Bernadette Martin-Hisard, 'Trébizonde et le culte de Saint Eugène (6^e–11^es)', *Revue des Études Arméniennes* (Paris, 1980), n.s. 14, pp. 307–43; and Robert W. Edwards, 'Armenian and Byzantine Religious Practices in Early Fifteenth-century Trabzon: A Spanish Viewpoint', *Revue des Études Arméniennes* (Paris, 1992), n.s. 23, pp. 81–90.
- 12 Raymond H. Kévorkian and Paul B. Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman à la veille du Génocide* (Paris: Les Éditions d'Art et d'Histoire ARHIS, 1992), p. 57.
- 13 Inchichian (1806), p. 396; H. Minas Vardapet Bzhshkian, *Batmut' iwn Pontosi vor ē Seaw Tsov [History of the Pontos which is the Black Sea]* (Venice: St Lazarus Monastery, 1819), p. 97; Kévorkian and Paboudjian (1992), p. 57.
- 14 Veyssel Atacan and Serdar Bekar, *Rize Hemşin Yöresi Osmanlı Mezar Taşları ve Kitabeleri – Ottoman Tombstones and Epigraphes in Hemşin Area of Rize* (Ankara: Türk Halk Kültürünü Araştırma ve Tanıtma Vakfı, 2001), p. 102; the authors say that the translation of the berat is incomplete because parts of the original manuscript document were left out of the photocopy provided to them. The mosque must have disappeared in later times, since the current mosque in Ormançık was built in 1826; see Haşim Karpuz, *Rize* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992), pp. 50–52.
- 15 Atacan and Bekar (2001), p. 95.
- 16 Tashian (1980), vol. 2, p. 129.
- 17 Inchichian (1806), p. 397.
- 18 Anthony Bryer, 'The Tourkokratia in the Pontos: Some Problems and Preliminary Conclusions', *Neo-Hellenika* (Austin, TX, 1970), 1, p. 42; reprinted in *The Empire of Trebizond and the Pontos* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980); Alexandre Toumarkine, *Les Lazes en Turquie (XIX^e–XX^e siècles)* (Istanbul: Isis, 1995), p. 2.
- 19 Toumarkine (1995), p. 94 and n. 125; on the role of the Lazi as the 'local Kurds', see Tashian (1980), vol. 2, p. 191.
- 20 Robert Catu, 'Le peuple Pashai', *Central Asian Survey* (London, 1995), 14, no. 3, pp. 449–61.

- 21 See Chapter 13 by Erhan Ersoy (this volume).
- 22 Inchichian (1806), p. 396.
- 23 Yakovb Karnets'i, 'Erzeroum ou Topographie de la Haute Arménie', trans. Frédéric Macler, *Journal Asiatique* (Paris, 1919), 13 (11th series), no. 2, pp. 156–57 and 176–77.
- 24 Anthony Bryer, 'The Crypto-Christians of the Pontos and Consul William Gifford Palgrave of Trebizond', *Deltio Kentrou Mikrasiatikon Spoudon* (Athens, 1983), 4; reprinted in *Peoples and Settlement in Anatolia and the Caucasus, 800–1900* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1988), p. 24.
- 25 Dashian [Tashian] (1922), p. 74; Tashian (1980), vol. 2, p. 175.
- 26 Dashian [Tashian] (1922), p. 45; Tashian (1980), vol. 2, pp. 172–74 n. 182.
- 27 H. Minas Vardapet Bzhshkian, *Chanaparhordut'iwn i Lehastan ew yayl Koghman Bnakeals i Haykazants' Serelots' i Nakhneats' Ani K'aghak'in, Sharagreal Handerdz Zanazan Banasirakan Teghekut'eambk'* [*Travels to Poland and other Places Populated by Armenians Descending from Forefathers from the City of Ani, Annotated with a Variety of Philological Information*] (Venice: St Lazarus Monastery, 1830), p. 84
- 28 Faroqhi (1984), pp. 77 and 360 n. 18.
- 29 See the passage on Mala below.
- 30 Bzhshkian (1819), p. 82.
- 31 Yakovb Karnets'i (1919), pp. 156 and 203–04. Victor Fontanier, who visited Erzurum during the 1820s, wrote that the largest of the twenty mosques of the city was the former St Stephen Church; see his *Voyages en Orient entrepris par ordre du gouvernement français de l'année 1821 à l'année 1829. Turquie d'Asie* (Paris: Librairie Universelle de P. Mongie Aîné, 1829), p. 55.
- 32 Bryer (1970), pp. 42–43; see also his 'The Last Laz Risings and the Downfall of the Pontic Derebeys, 1812–1840', *Bedi Kartlisa: Revue de kartvêlologie* (Paris, 1969), 26, p. 196.
- 33 Mkhit'ariants' (1857), pp. 39–45.
- 34 Bryer (1970), p. 43; also see Claire Mouradian, 'Aperçu sur l'islamisation des Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman: Le cas des Hamchentsi/Hemşili', in *Conversions islamiques: Identités religieuses en Islam méditerranéen – Islamic Conversions: Religious Identities in Mediterranean Islam*, ed. Mercedes Garcia-Arenal (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2002), pp. 407–08.
- 35 Barunak T'orlak'yan, *Hamshenahayeri Azgagrut'yunë* [*The Ethnography of Hamshen Armenians*] (Erevan: Publications of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1981), pp. 40–41 and 41n. 10; A. Kh. Safrastyan, 'Kostandnupolsi Hayots' Patriark'arani Koghmits' T'urk'iayi Ardaradatut'yan ew Davanank'neri Ministrut'yan Nerkayats'vats' Haykakan Ekeghets'ineri ew Vank'eri Ts'uts'aknern u T'ak'rirnerë' [Lists and Reports of Armenian Churches and Monasteries Presented by the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul to the Turkish Ministry of Justice and Cults], *Ėjmiatsin* (1966), 23, no. 6, p. 42.
- 36 Bryer (1970), pp. 43–45; Bryer (1969), pp. 191–97; Malkhas [Artashēs Hovsēp'ian], Foreword to Misak' T'orlak'ian's *Örerus Het* [*With My Days*] (Los Angeles: Horizon Press, 1953), p. 17.
- 37 Mkhit'ariants' (1857), pp. 45–47 and 53. Much fighting took place from 1758 to 1759 between derebeys and the pasha, supported by the janissaries, as well as within rival janissary companies; see Bryer (1969), p. 196 and n. 6.
- 38 Mkhit'ariants' (1857), p. 47.
- 39 Faroqhi (1984), p. 77.
- 40 Malkhas [Artashēs Hovsēp'ian], *Chambus Vray* [*Along My Way*], vol. 1 (New York, 1950), pp. 280–81; Malkhas (1953), p. 16.
- 41 Minas G. Gasapian [Farhat], *Hayerë Nikomidioy Gawarî mej* [*The Armenians of the Nicomedia District*] (Partizak, Turkey: Azatamart, 1913), p. 82n.
- 42 Sargis Haykuni, *Husēp'is i Azgatohm ew Tarōrinak Awazak Abrieōm Trabizoni Hay Giwgheru mej 1795–1840* [*The Clan of Husēp' and the Curious Bandit Abrieōm in the*

- Armenian Villages of Trebizond 1795–1840*] (Vagharshapat: Press of the Holy See of Ejmiatsin, 1905), pp. 17–25; Hovakim Khushpulian, ‘Mala Giwghê’ [The Village of Mala], in *Patmut’iwn Haykakan Pontosi* [History of Armenian Pontos], ed. Hovakim Hovakimian [Arshakuni] (Beirut: Mshak Press, 1967), pp. 446–49; Misak’ T’orlak’ian, *Örerus Het* [With My Days] (Los Angeles, CA: Horizon Press, 1953), pp. 108–11; Malkhas (1950), pp. 280–87.
- 43 Malkhas (1950), p. 280; Malkhas 1953, p. 16.
- 44 Malkhas (1950), pp. 280–86; T’orlak’ian (1953), pp. 108–11; Khushpulian (1967), pp. 446–49.
- 45 Sargis Haykuni [Ghazarian] was born in 1838 in the village of Zefanos (in the Yomra county of Trabzon). On his life and works, see the monograph by Verzhine G. Svazlyan, *Sargis Haykuni* (Kyank’n u Gortsuneut’yunê) [*Sargis Haykuni* (His Life and Works)] (Erevan: Publications of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1973).
- 46 Haykuni (1905), pp. 17–20.
- 47 Malkhas (1953), pp. 17 and 18n.
- 48 Haykuni (1905), pp. 21–25.
- 49 Ibid., pp. 8–9.
- 50 Barunak T’orlak’yan, ‘Ējer Hamshenahayeri XVII–XVIII Dareri Patmut’ynits’ ’ [Pages from the Seventeenth–Eighteenth Centuries History of Hamshen Armenians], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes* [Historico-Philological Review] (Erevan, 1972), no. 4 (59), pp. 133–36.
- 51 Malkhas (1950), pp. 280–81.
- 52 In Ottoman times, the modern-day counties of Araklı and Sürmene were part of a single administrative unit called Sürmene, with its centre in the town of Araklı, while the present Sürmene was called Hamurgân; see Antony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1985), pp. 323–24.
- 53 Sargis Haykuni, ‘Nshkharner: Korats u Morats’uats Hayer’ [Fragments: Lost and Forgotten Armenians], *Ararat* (Vagharshapat, 1895), no. 8, p. 294; Trdat Eps Palian, ‘Hay Vanorayk’ ’ [Armenian Monasteries], *Biwzandion* [Byzantium] (Constantinople, 1900), 4, no. 1027, 9 March, p. 1 and (1901), 5, no. 1386, 6 May, p. 1. Tashian (1980), vol. 2, pp. 121–22n. 125; and Father Hamazasp Oskian, *Sebastiayi, Kharberdi, Tiarpek’iri ew Trapizoni Nahangneru Vank’erê* [The Monasteries of the Provinces of Sebastia, Kharberd, Diyarbekir, and Trebizond] (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1962), pp. 233 and 236. Mehmet Bilgin believes that St Vardan was located in the modern-day Arpalı village, in the southernmost part of Sürmene, and that the mosque of the village was built over it. The village of Vartan, along with a yayla of the same name, once stood close to Arpalı; only the yayla, which now falls under the administrative jurisdiction of the Çaykara county of Trabzon, remains today; see Mehmet Bilgin, ‘Sürmene Tarihi’, in *Sürmene*, ed. Mehmet Bilgin and Ömer Yıldırım (Sürmene: Sürmene Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1990), pp. 227–28.
- 54 T’umayian (1899), p. 175; see also Chapter 7 by Hagop Hachikian (this volume).
- 55 Bilgin (1990), pp. 220–21.
- 56 T’umayian (1899), p. 175.
- 57 Margarita Poutouridou, ‘The Of Valley and the Coming of Islam: The Case of the Greek-Speaking Muslims’, *Deltio Kentrou Mikrasiatikon Spoudon* (Athens, 1997–98), 12, pp. 52–53.
- 58 Bilgin (1990), p. 158.
- 59 Haykuni (1895), p. 243; Bilgin (1990), p. 189. The village, divided in two, is now known as Kestanelik and Keçıkaya, for respectively Büyük and Küçük Zimla.
- 60 Bilgin (1990), pp. 220–21.
- 61 Bzhshkian (1819), p. 93; T’umayian (1899), p. 175. I am indebted to Hagop Hachikian for his explanation.

- 62 Haykuni (1895), p. 242.
- 63 Haykuni's article, 'Nshkharner: Korats u Mo'rats' uats Hayer' [Fragments: Lost and Forgotten Armenians], was published in two parts in the July and August 1895 issues of *Ararat* (pp. 239–43 and 293–97).
- 64 Ibid., p. 240. Haykuni is obviously confused in saying that Karadere and Hamshen had only one priest for thirty-six villages. It should be noted here that Haykuni tended to lump together the two areas and to believe they shared borders, which they did not. From its contents, it is clear that the text applies to Karadere, and any information presented as pertaining to Hamshen is most likely to actually refer to Karadere rather than to Hamshen, which does not appear to have been visited by Haykuni.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Ibid., p. 241.
- 68 Ibid., pp. 241–42.
- 69 T'umayian (1899), p. 176.
- 70 Hovakim Hovakimian [Arshakuni] (ed.), *Patmut' iwn Haykakan Pontosi* [History of Armenian Pontos] (Beirut: Mshak Press, 1967), p. 62.
- 71 Haykuni (1895), pp. 242–43.
- 72 Poutouridou (1997–98), p. 53.
- 73 Ibid., p. 50.
- 74 Haykuni (1895), p. 239; Hrach'eay Acharian, *K'nnut'yun Hamsheni Barbari* [Study of the Hamshen Dialect] (Erevan: Erevan State University Press, 1947), p. 5.
- 75 T'umayian (1899), p. 176.
- 76 See T'orlak'yan (1972), p. 135 n. 11.
- 77 Mkhitar'iants' (1857), p. 47.
- 78 Yücel Özkaya, 'XVIII. Yüzyılda Trabzon'un Genel Durumu', in *Birinci Tarih Boyunca Karadeniz Kongresi Bildirileri, 13–17 Ekim 1986*, ed. Mehmet Sağlam et al. (Samsun: Eser Matbaası, 1988), p. 141 n. 22.
- 79 Maghak'ia [Tēr Babgēn K'ahanay] Arslanian, *Baberd ew ir Shrjannerē* [Baberd (Bayburt) and its Districts] (Paris, 1955), p. 15.
- 80 Bilgin (1990), pp. 186–87, 205, 206 n. 1 and 227–28. See the excellent discussion by Hagop Hachikian on this topic in Chapter 7 (this volume).
- 81 Ibid., pp. 314 and 328.
- 82 Haykuni (1895), p. 242.
- 83 Bzhshkian (1819), pp. 49 and 97; Mkhitar'iants' (1857), p. 47; T'umayian (1899), p. 177.
- 84 Mkhitar'iants' (1857), p. 47; T'umayian (1899), p. 177.
- 85 Özkaya (1988), p. 141 n. 22.
- 86 Mkhitar'iants' (1857), p. 47.
- 87 Mahmut Goloğlu, *Trabzon Tarihi: Fetihden Kurtuluşa Kadar* (Ankara: Kalite Matbaası, 1975), pp. 122–26; Mkhitar'iants' (1857), pp. 47–48; T'umayian (1899), p. 177.
- 88 T'orlak'yan (1981), p. 96.
- 89 Bzhshkian (1819), p. 49.
- 90 Inchichian (1806), p. 397; Tashian (1980), vol. 2, p. 129.
- 91 Atacan and Bekar (2001), p. 102.
- 92 Babkēn At'orakits' Kat'oghikos Kiwlēsērian (ed.), *Ts'uts'ak Dzeragrats' Ankiwrioy Karmir Vanuts' ew Shrjakayits'* [Catalogue of Manuscripts of the Red Monastery of Angora and the Surroundings] (Antelias: Press of the Armenian Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia, 1957), pp. 997–1000.
- 93 Orkun Yaman, 'Etniklik ve Hemşin Üzerine (Bulutların Ülkesi Hemşin 4)', *Halkbilimi: Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Türk Halk Bilimi Topluluğu* (Ankara, 1998), no. 7, p. 56.
- 94 Malkhas (1953), p. 16.
- 95 Atrpet [Sargis Mubayajian], *Chorokhi Awazanē* [The Basin of the Çoruh] (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1929), p. 110.

- 96 Sekhnia Tchkhéidzé, 'Chronique de Géorgie', in *Histoire de la Géorgie: Depuis l'antiquité jusqu'au XIX^e siècle*, edited and translated by Marie-Félicité Brosset, part II, *Histoire moderne*, vol. 2 (St Petersburg: Imprimerie de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1857), p. 39 and n. 2. On Ârifi Ahmed Pasha, see Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî: Osmanlı Ünlüleri*, edited by Nuri Akbayer and transliterated into modern Turkish script by Seyit Ali Kahraman (Istanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı ile Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 219 and 321; Fahameddin Başar, *Osmanlı Eyâlet Tevcihâtı (1717–1730)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), pp. 92 and n. 213, and 282.
- 97 Tashian (1980), vol. 2, p. 129; see also Atacan and Bekar (2001).
- 98 Atacan and Bekar (2001), pp. 108–12.
- 99 Antony Bryer, 'Historical Note on Zil Kale', *Archeion Pontou* (Athens, 1977–78), 34, p. 55.
- 100 Atacan and Bekar (2001), p. 102; Karpuz (1992), pp. 50–52 and 59–60; M. Ali Sakaoğlu *et al.* (eds), *Cumhuriyetimizin 75. Yılı Kutlamaları Çerçevesinde 1. Hemşin Bal, Kültür ve Turizm Şenlikleri, 22–23 Ağustos 1998* (Ankara: Hemşin Hizmet Vakfı, 1998), p. 33.
- 101 Inchichian (1806), p. 396.
- 102 *Ibid.*, p. 396.
- 103 Bzhshkian (1819), p. 97.
- 104 R. M. Dawkins, 'The Crypto-Christians of Turkey', *Byzantion* (Brussels, 1933), 8, no. 1, pp. 254 and 257 n. 3; Bryer (1983), p. 16.
- 105 Inchichian (1806), pp. 341–42.
- 106 Bernard Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique (Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Rome: École française de Rome, Palais Farnèse, 1994), p. 618.
- 107 Dawkins (1933), p. 271.
- 108 *Ibid.*, p. 273.
- 109 *Ibid.*, p. 269.
- 110 *Ibid.*, pp. 268–73.
- 111 Bzhshkian (1819), p. 97.
- 112 Pirō, 'Tachkats'ats Hayer' [Turkified Armenians], *Nor-Dar [New Age]* (Tiflis, 1893), 10, no. 227, 21 December, p. 3; Bzhshkian (1819), p. 97.
- 113 On Vardavar, see Chapter 13 by Erhan Ersoy, as well as Chapter 11 by Uwe Bläsing and Chapter 15 by Rüdiger Benninghaus (this volume).
- 114 G. Amatuni [Garegin Amatian], 'Dareru Ēnt'ats'k'in T'rk'ats'ats Hayer, K'rtats'ats Hayer' [Armenians Turkified and Kurdified throughout the Ages], *Nayiri* (Beirut, 1980), 25, nos. 3–4, 31 May, p. 15 and nos. 7–8, 30 June, p. 13.
- 115 Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie: Géographie administrative, statistique, descriptive et raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie-Mineure*, vol. 1 (Paris: E. Leroux, 1890), p. 121.
- 116 Pirō (1893), p. 3.
- 117 H. Barsegh Sargsian and H. Grigor Sargsian (eds), *Mayr Ts'uts'ak Hayerēn Dzeṛagrats' Matenadaranin Mkhit'areants' i Venetik [Grand Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts in the Library of the Venice Mekhitarists]*, vol. 3 (Venice: St Lazarus Monastery, 1966), pp. 4–5. An Italian-language version of the episode is available in Gabriella Uluhogian, 'La collezione di manoscritti della biblioteca di San Lazzaro', in *San Lazzaro degli Armeni: L'isola, il monastero, il restauro*, ed. Michela Maguolo and Massimiliano Bandera (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1999), p. 129.
- 118 Mouradian (2002), pp. 408–09.
- 119 Inchichian (1806), p. 397; see Chapter 7 by Hagop Hachikian (this volume).
- 120 Tashian (1980), vol. 2, pp. 216–19.
- 121 Father Poghos Mēhērian, 'Patmutiun Varuts' Teān H. Poghos Vardapeti Mēhērian, Sharagreal Yiwrēmē 1811 Venetik, i Vans Srboyn Ghazaru' [History of the Life of Father Poghos Mēhērian, Composed by Him, Venice, 1811, in the monastery of

- St Lazarus], Library of the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice, Manuscript 560, pp. 161 and 168–69; quoted in Vardanyan (1998), pp. 2 and 8 n. 3 and 4; H. B. Sargisian, ‘Vichakagrakan Nor Tesut’iwn mẽ i Npast Ankakh Hayastani’ [A New Statistical Analysis in Favour of Independent Armenia], *Bazmavep* [Polyhistory] (Venice, 1919), 77, no. 9, pp. 284–85.
- 122 Pirō (1893), p. 3.
- 123 According to Islamic law, Christian women can marry Muslim men and keep their faith, while Christian men cannot marry Muslim women without converting to Islam.
- 124 Pirō (1893), p. 3.
- 125 Bryer (1970), pp. 46–47.
- 126 Harut’iwn V. Hulunian and Matt’ēos V. Hachian (eds), *Hushamatean Khotorjuri* [Memorial Book of Khotorjur] (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1964), p. 165.
- 127 Inchichian (1806), p. 397.
- 128 Atacan and Bekar (2001), p. 102; Kiwlēsērian (1957), pp. 997–1000.
- 129 Inchichian (1806), pp. 396–97.
- 130 W. Gifford Palgrave, ‘Report by Consul W. Gifford Palgrave on the Provinces of Trebizond, Sivas, Kastemouni, and Part of Angora’, *Commercial Reports Received from Her Majesty’s Consuls, Accounts and Papers* (1868), 59, no. 9, p. 363. Palgrave’s mistaken figure was reproduced by Tsate Batsaşi in his otherwise excellent chapter ‘Hemşinliler’, in *Trabzon’dan Abhazya’ya: Doğu Karadeniz Halklarının Tarih ve Kültürleri*, edited and translated from Georgian into Turkish by Hayri Hayrioğlu (Istanbul: Sorun Yayınları, 1998), p. 72. On Palgrave’s frequent inaccuracies, see Bryer (1983), pp. 27–28 and n. 31, and his ‘Late Byzantine Rural Society in Matzouka’, in *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society*, ed. Anthony Bryer and Heath Lowry (Birmingham/Washington, DC: University of Birmingham, Centre for Byzantine Studies/Dumbarton Oaks, Research Library and Collection, 1986), p. 57 n. 6.
- 131 W. Gifford Palgrave, ‘Report, on the Lazistan Coast and the Corresponding Inland Districts between Shefkatefl or Port St. Nicholas on the Russo-Caucasian Frontier and Trebizond, in the Summer of the Year 1872’, Great Britain, Public Records Office/Foreign Office (PRO/FO) 526/8, 29 January 1873, p. 33.
- 132 H. Hakob K’ōsian (ed.), *Ts’uts’ak Hayerēn Dzeragrats’ Artsnean Varzharani ew Karnoy Giwgheru* [Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts from the Artsnean School and the Villages of Erzurum] (Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1964), p. 67; Edwards (1988), p. 421. On Khach’kavank’, see Tēr Hovhannēs K’ahanay Vagharshakertts’i, *Chanaparhort’ut’iwn T. Hovhannēs K’ahanayē Vagharshakertts’oy i Sahmans Bardzr Hayots’* [Travel of Father John of Vagharshakert to the Borders of Upper Armenia], vol. 1 (Constantinople: Tpagrut’iwn Petros Chēzvēchian, 1870), pp. 24–25, and Tashian (1980), vol. 2, p. 83 and n. 80b. *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi*, edited and transliterated from Ottoman Turkish by Kudret Emiroğlu, vol. 1, 1869 (Ankara: Trabzon İli ve İlçeleri Eğitim, Kültür ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Vakfı, 1993), p. 145; vol. 2, 1870 (1993), p. 185.
- 133 Bryer (1983), p. 22.
- 134 *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi*, vol. 1, 1869 (1993), p. 155.
- 135 See Chapter 5 by Alexandre Toumarkine (this volume).
- 136 W. Gifford Palgrave, ‘Vestiges of Glacial Action in North-Eastern Anatolia’, *Nature* (London, 1872), 6, no. 157, p. 538.
- 137 Bzhshkian (1819), p. 93.
- 138 Haykuni (1895), p. 242. Haykuni provides a vivid portrait of Tēr Karapet and describes one of his visits to Karadere in the biography of the bandit Abrieōm; see Haykuni (1905), pp. 44–59, and Hovakimian (1967), pp. 62–63.
- 139 Haykuni (1895), p. 242–43.
- 140 Hovakimian (1967), pp. 64–66; Haykuni (1895), p. 243.
- 141 Haykuni (1895), p. 243; Haykuni (1905), pp. 54–58; Hovakimian (1967), pp. 63–65; T’orlak’ian (1953), p. 259.

- 142 Hovakimian (1967), pp. 67–68.
- 143 T‘umayian (1899), p. 175.
- 144 Hakob Muradians‘, ‘Sew Tsovi Ap‘erin’ [On the Shores of the Black Sea], *Murch [The Hammer]* (Tiflis, 1898), 10, no. 4, pp. 473–74.
- 145 William Gifford Palgrave, ‘Letter to the Honorable H. G. Elliot’, Great Britain, Public Records Office/Foreign Office (PRO/FO) 195/953, letter no. 20, 6 April 1869, pp. 64–66; copy in PRO/FO 524/14, pp. 32–33 (henceforth Palgrave (1869)). ‘Kaleefa’ is spelt ‘Kalfah’ in another instance (PRO/FO 524/14, p. 48). Palgrave describes it as a ‘coast-village about twenty miles Eastward’ of Trebizond. Since there is no settlement named Kaleefa on the coast, it is likely that the reference is actually to the village of Kalafka, which, however, is located inland. Palgrave did not judge it necessary to send the original petition to the ambassador, so it is not known whether the mention of 400 years was indeed included in it. The petition is also mentioned by A. Derché, the French consul at Trebizond; like Palgrave, he fails to include the original in the letter sent to his superiors; see A. Derché, ‘Envoi d’une requête adressée par les Croumlys’, France, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Correspondance Politique des Consuls, Turquie, Trébizonde, tome 4, letter no. 18, 5 April 1869, p. 162. On the Islamized Armenians of Yomra and Platana (Akçaabat), see Hovakimian (1967), p. 67.
- 146 T‘orlak‘yan (1981), p. 40.
- 147 Palgrave (1869). On Palgrave’s despise of crypto-Christians and of their desire to revert to open worship of Christianity, and on his own multiple conversions, see Bryer (1983).
- 148 Haykuni (1905), p. 59n.; ‘Lazistani Hayer’ [The Armenians of Lazistan], *Mankavarzhanoṭs’*: *Mankavarzhakan ew Grakanakan Amsagir* [Pedagogical School: Pedagogical and Literary Monthly] (St Petersburg, 1887), 4, no. 1, p. 14. The Greeks of Kromni (Kurum) were also forced to continue serving in the army, even though their new status as Christians had been officially recognized; see PRO/FO 524/16, pp. 171–75, 188–90 and 239–41.
- 149 T‘umayian (1899), p. 175; Haykuni (1895), pp. 242 and 297; Hovakimian (1967), p. 68; on the abuses and exactions perpetrated by Hasan Efendi, a mullah from Of, see Bryer (1983), pp. 48–49.
- 150 Haykuni (1895), pp. 243 and 297; T‘orlak‘ian (1953), p. 259; Hovakim Khushpulian, ‘K‘ēmalakan Arhawirk‘nerē’ [The Kemalist Atrocities], in *Patmut‘iwn Haykakan Pontosi* [History of Armenian Pontos], ed. Hovakim Hovakimian [Arshakuni] (Beirut: Mshak Press, 1967), pp. 304–05.
- 151 T‘umayian (1899), p. 176.
- 152 Haykuni (1895), p. 243.
- 153 Smith (1833), pp. 324–25.
- 154 Cuinet (1890), p. 121.
- 155 Pirō (1893), p. 3.
- 156 A. P. Megavorian [Meghavorian], ‘K voprosu ob etnograficheskikh usloviiax razvitiia narodnosti Chorokhskaḡo basseina’ [On the Question of Ethnographic Circumstances in the Development of the Nationalities of the Chorokh Basin], *Izviestii Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Bulletin of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (Tiflis, 1904), 17, no. 5, p. 367; Gasapian (1913), pp. 145–46; Nikolai Iakovlevich Marr, ‘Iz poezdki v Turetskii Lazistan: Vpechatleniia i nabliudeniia’ [Travels in Turkish Lazistan: Impressions and Observations], *Izviestii Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk – Bulletin de l’Académie Impériale des Sciences de St-Petersbourg* (1910), 4 (6th series), no. 8, 1 May, p. 608.
- 157 Şâkir Şevket, *Trabzon Tarihi: İlk Türkçe Şehir Tarihi*, edited by İsmail Hacıfettahoğlu (Ankara: Trabzon Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları/Atlas Yayıncılık, 2001), pp. 105–06.
- 158 Bryer (1983), pp. 16 and 35–36.

- 159 Karl Koch, *Wanderungen im Oriente während der Jahre 1843 und 1844*, vol. 2, *Reise im pontischen Gebirge und türkische Armenien* (Weimar: Landes Industrie Comptoirs, 1846), pp. 55–58. The trip to Karmenik was not all lost, given the excellent brandy prepared in the village which, to Koch's surprise, was also highly appreciated by his Turkish guides.
- 160 Bryer (1970), p. 45 n. 45.
- 161 Koch (1846), vol. 2, p. 167.
- 162 Georg Rosen, *Über die Sprache der Lazen* (Berlin: Lemgo and Detmold, Meyersche Hofbuchhandlung, 1844), p. 2; Toumarkine (1995), p. 46.
- 163 Bryer (1983), pp. 24–25.
- 164 See Chapter 5 by Alexandre Toumarkine (this volume). See also, Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2002).
- 165 Toumarkine (1995), p. 46.
- 166 Gaëlle Dupont, 'Le Parler Breton s'est Perdu dans les Tranchées', *Le Monde* (Paris, 1998), 6 November, p. 12.
- 167 This question was first asked by Meghavorian in 1904; see Megavorian [Meghavorian] (1904), p. 367.
- 168 Atrpet (1929), pp. 197–98.
- 169 See Chapter 11 by Uwe Blaesing (this volume).
- 170 Wolfgang Feurstein, 'Bemerkungen zur Ethnologie der Hemschinen', forthcoming.
- 171 Rüdiger Benninghaus, 'Zur Herkunft und Identität der Hemsinli', in *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, ed. Peter Alford Andrews with the assistance of Rüdiger Benninghaus (Wiesbaden: Dr Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1989), p. 479 and n. 17; Hamdi Alemdar, *Rize İli 100. Yıl Örnek Köyü: Cıvil Rehberi* (Samsun?, n.d.), p. 190. For a list of Armenian-derived family names, see appendix 12.1.
- 172 Pirō (1893), p. 3.
- 173 Barunak T'orlak'yan, 'Drvagner Hamshenahayeri Patmut'yunits' [Episodes from the History of Hamshen Armenians], *Banber Erevani Hamalsarani* [Bulletin of Erevan University] (1971), no. 2 (14), p. 199; T'orlak'yan (1981), p. 30; Gasapian (1913), p. 145.
- 174 N. N. Levashov, 'Zamietka o pogranichnoi linii i zonie, na razstoianii ot berega Chernago moria do goroda Artvina (s kartoiu)' [A Note on the Border Line and Zone, from the Coast of the Black Sea to the City of Artvin (with a Map)], *Izvestiia Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Bulletin of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (Tiflis, 1880), 6, no. 2, pp. 227–28; E. K. Liuzen, 'Bereg Russkago Lazistana' [The Border of Russian Lazistan], translated by D. A. Levshin, *Izvestiia Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Bulletin of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (Tiflis, 1905–06), 18, no. 3, p. 170.
- 175 Hasan Dursunovich Salikh-Oghli, 'Harts'azroyts' Hemshilneru Arachnordin Het' [Interview with the Patriarch of the Hemshils], interview by Artawazd T'ulumchian, *Asbarez* [Horizon] (Glendale, CA, 2002), 4 May, p. 18. For discussions on Ardeletsi and Turtsevantzi, see Chapter 12 by Hagop Hachikian (this volume), as well as Igor Kuznetsov's chapter in the forthcoming second volume of *The Hemshin*.
- 176 Ali Gündüz, *Hemşinliler: Dil – Tarih – Kültür* (Ankara: Ardanuç Kültür Yardımlaşma Derneği, 2002), pp. 63, 88, 99, 139 and 157–58.
- 177 G. Kazbek, 'Tri miesiatsa v Turetskoi Gruzii' [Three Months in Turkish Georgia], *Zapiski Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Notes of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (Tiflis, 1876), 10, no. 1, pp. 99–101; Liuzen (1905–06), pp. 160–61; D. Bakradse [Dm. Z. Bakradze], 'Das türkische Grusien', trans. N. Von Seidlitz, *Russische Revue: Monatsschrift für die Kunde Russlands* (St Petersburg, 1877), 10, pp. 355 and 366.
- 178 Liuzen (1905–06), p. 169.

- 179 Harut'iwn Gat'ēnian, 'Namak Ardahanits'' [Letter from Ardahan], *Mshak [The Tiller]* (Tiflis, 1883), 12, no. 168, 5 November, pp. 2–3; idem, 'Ch'ors Tari Shavshēt'-Imerkhēvum Shrijagayut'ean Ardiwnk'its'' [From the Result of a Four-Years Tour of Shavshet-Imerkhevi], *Mshak [The Tiller]* (Tiflis, 1888), 16, no. 83, 23 July, p. 2; Levashov (1880), p. 228; Liuzen (1905–06), p. 168.
- 180 See the chapters by Sergey Vardanyan and Igor Kuznetsov in the forthcoming second volume of *The Hemshin*.
- 181 Gat'ēnian (1888), p. 2; *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi*, vol. 12, 1881 (1999), p. 271. The total for the Bash Hemshin population is calculated by adding to the figures for the Hemshin nahiye to those of the Hemshin villages (e.g. Cimil, Haçapit, Abuhemşin) located in neighbouring districts.
- 182 Benninghaus (1989), p. 485.
- 183 Hanefi M. Bostan, *XV–XVI. Asırlarda Trabzon Sancağında Sosyal ve İktisadî Hayat* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2002), p. 40; Özkaya (1988), p. 134.
- 184 Goloğlu (1975), pp. 120–22; Bilgin (1990), p. 283.
- 185 Inchichian (1806), p. 396.
- 186 Bryer (1970), p. 45.
- 187 Koch (1846), vol. 2, pp. 23–24. Koch also mentions that he was never able to comprehend the difference between voyvod and another title, *mütesellim*, since both described the official in charge of an administrative entity known as a sancak. His supposition was that when a district was overwhelmingly Christian, its governor would be called a voyvod, while mütesellim would be reserved for Muslim-populated districts. See Chapter 5 by Alexandre Toumarkine (this volume) for derebeys, and Chapter 7 by Hagop Hachikian for an explanation of the titles of voyvod and mütesellim.
- 188 Koch (1846), vol. 2, p. 23.
- 189 On the Kipchaks in Georgia, see Peter B. Golden, 'Cumanica I: The Qıpçaqs in Georgia', *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* (Wiesbaden, 1984), 4, pp. 45–87, particularly pp. 78–80 on Kubasar.
- 190 On Turkic, particularly Çepni Türkmen, origins of derebey families, see Bryer (1969), p. 193.
- 191 Atacan and Bekar (2001), pp. 6, 10, 38, 42 and 99.
- 192 This story was told to Hagop Hachikian by a Hopa Hemshinli informant.
- 193 Orhan Kılıç, *18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Osmanlı Devleti'nin İdari Taksimatı – Eyalet ve Sancak Tevcihatı* (Elazığ, Turkey: Ceren Matbaacılık, 1997), p. 159.
- 194 Bursalı Mehmet Tahir Efendi, *Osmanlı Müellifleri, 1299–1915*, vol. 1, edited by A. Fikri Yavuz and İsmail Özen (Istanbul: Meral Yayınevi, 1971), p. 264.
- 195 Bryer (1969), pp. 209–10.
- 196 Bzhshkian (1830), p. 84.
- 197 T'umayian (1899), p. 166.
- 198 Koch (1846), vol. 2, p. 116; Tashian (1980), vol. 2, pp. 115–16 and 175.
- 199 Palgrave (1868), pp. 373–78; other excerpts by Palgrave on this topic are provided in Bryer (1969), pp. 193–94 and n. 2.
- 200 *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi*, vol. 2, 1870 (1993), p. 101; vol. 3, 1871 (1993), p. 113; vol. 4, 1872 (1994), p. 115; vol. 5, 1873 (1995), p. 117; vol. 6, 1874 (1995), p. 121; vol. 7, 1875 (1995), p. 199; vol. 8, 1876 (1995), p. 195; vol. 9, 1877 (1995), p. 135; vol. 10, 1878 (1999), p. 155; vol. 11, 1879 (1999), p. 183; vol. 12, 1881 (1999), p. 177.
- 201 Ibid., vol. 2, 1870 (1993), pp. 237–39; vol. 3, 1871 (1993), p. 257; vol. 4, 1872 (1994), p. 259; vol. 5, 1873 (1995), p. 217; vol. 6, 1874 (1995), p. 223; vol. 7, 1875 (1995), p. 293; vol. 8, 1876 (1995), p. 459; vol. 9, 1877 (1995), p. 383; vol. 10, 1878 (1999), pp. 237, 245 and 311; vol. 11, 1879 (1999), pp. 261, 271, 289 and 333; vol. 12, 1881 (1999), pp. 295, 305 and 363.
- 202 Palgrave (1873), pp. 33, 42 and 54; Russian translation [V. Dzh. Pal'grev], 'Otchet konsula Pal'grevu, za lieto 1872 goda, o beregie Lazistana i prilagaiushchikh k

- nemu vnutrennikh okrugakh mezhdu Shevketilem ili ukriepieniem Cv. Nikolaia, na russko-turetskoi granitsie, na beregu Chernogo moria, i Trapezondom', translated by A. A. Tsionglinskii, in *Materialy dlia opisaniia Aziatskoi Turtsii i Batumskoi oblasti. II. Otchet V. Dzhifforda Pal'greva o provintsiiakh Anatolii za 1867–68, 1869 i 1872 gody. Prilozheniia k VII tomu, 'Izvestiia Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva'* [Materials for the Description of Asiatic Turkey and the Batum Region. II. W. Gifford Palgrave's Account of the Provinces of Anatolia for the Years 1867–68, 1869 and 1872. Appendix to Volume VII of 'Bulletin of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society'], ed. E. G. Veidenbaum (Tiflis, 1882), pp. 70–74; *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi*, vol. 10, 1878 (1999), p. 245.
- 203 Palgrave (1873), p. 33; idem, Russian translation (1882), pp. 70–71. Curiously, in some cases, the Russian translation has more information than the English original. Either Palgrave provided Russian scholars with a more extensive version of his text, or some passages were added by the translator and his colleagues.
- 204 Russian translation (1882) of Palgrave (1873), p. 71; I. I. Stebnitskii, 'Pontiiskii khrebet. Otryvok iz orografiia Maloi Azii' [The Pontic Mountain Range. A Fragment of the Orography of Asia Minor], *Izvestiia Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Bulletin of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (Tiflis, 1881), 7, no. 1, p. 62; Osman Bey [Frederick Millingen], 'Lazistan', *Izvestiia Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Bulletin of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (St Petersburg, 1874), 10, no. 8, p. 359; Dm. Z. Bakradze, 'Zamietka o Batumskoi oblasti' [A Note on the Batum region], *Izvestiia Kavkazskago otdiela Imperatorskago russkago geograficheskago obshchestva* [Bulletin of the Caucasian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society] (Tiflis, 1880), 6, no. 2, pp. 161–62; Gat'ënian (1883), pp. 2–3.
- 205 Megavorian [Meghavorian], p. 367.
- 206 Palgrave (1873), pp. 33–34; *Trabzon Vilayeti Salnamesi*, vol. 1, 1869 (1993), p. 219; vol. 2, 1870 (1993), pp. 299–01 and 309; vol. 3, 1871 (1993), pp. 317–19, 327 and 335; vol. 4, 1872 (1994), pp. 325–27, 335 and 343; vol. 5, 1873 (1995), pp. 251, 259 and 265; vol. 6, 1874 (1995), pp. 255 and 257; vol. 7, 1875 (1995), pp. 327, 335 and 341; vol. 8, 1876 (1995), pp. 491, 501 and 507; vol. 10, 1878 (1999), pp. 337, 343 and 352; vol. 11, 1879 (1999), p. 333; vol. 13, 1888 (2002), p. 643.
- 207 Rifat Yüce, *Kocaeli Tarih ve Rehberi* (İzmit: Türk Yolu Matbaası, 1945), p. 193.
- 208 Gasapian (1913), pp. 81–100.
- 209 Ibid., pp. 143–47; see also Chapter 7 by Hagop Hachikian (this volume).
- 210 Hulunian and Hachian (1964), pp. 180–83 and p. 181 n. 1; Tashian (1980) vol. 2, p. 201 n. 200; Pirō (1893), pp. 2–3; Liuzen (1905–06), p. 168; Marr (1910), 15 April, pp. 552, 556–57 and 1 May, p. 618.
- 211 Hâle Soysü, 'Hemşinliler: Tulumla Konuşan Gururlu İnsanlar', *İkibin'e Doğru* (İstanbul, 1991), 5, no. 41, 8 December, p. 44; Sevan Nişanyan, Landon Thomas and Gabriele Ohl, *Zoom in Black Sea: A Traveler's Guide to Turkey's Black Sea Region* (İstanbul: Boyut Yayın Grubu/Boyut Publishing Group, 1990), pp. 121–22; Sevan Nişanyan and Müjde Nişanyan, *Karadeniz: Meraklısı İçin Gezi Rehberi – Black Sea: A Traveller's Handbook for Northern Turkey* (İstanbul: Boyut Yayın Grubu, 2000), pp. 150–51.
- 212 Hugh Pope, 'Market Scene', *Los Angeles Times* (1990), 7 August, p. 4; on the topic of migration to Russia, see Chapter 8 by Erhan Ersoy (this volume).